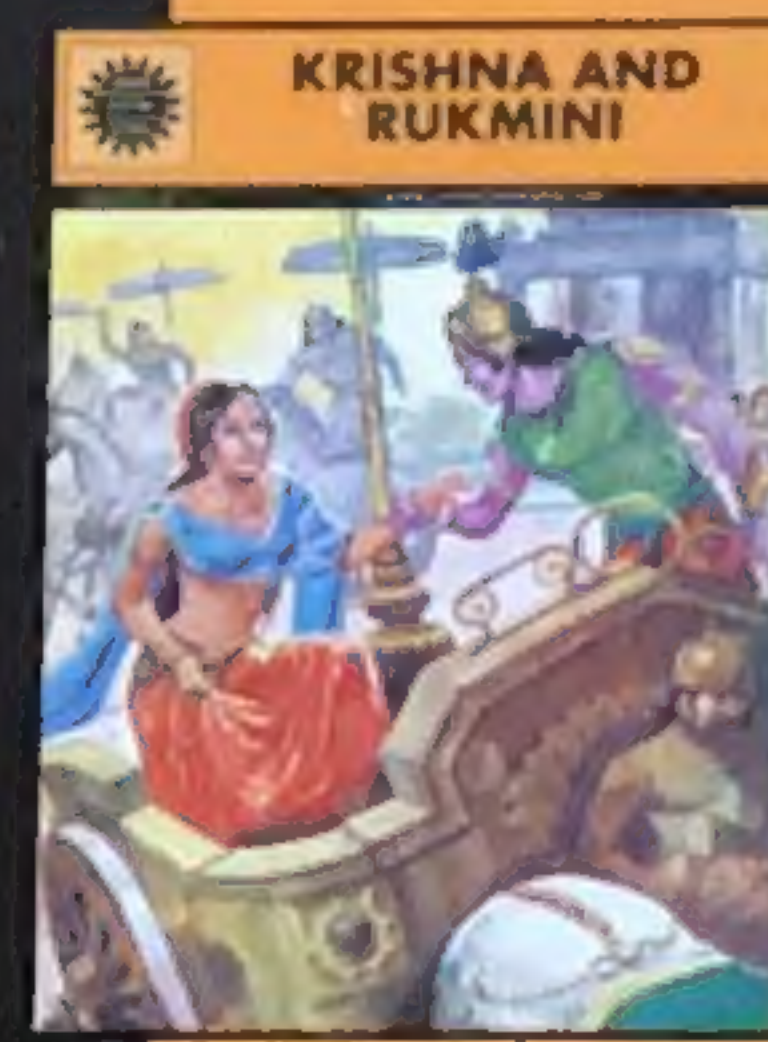
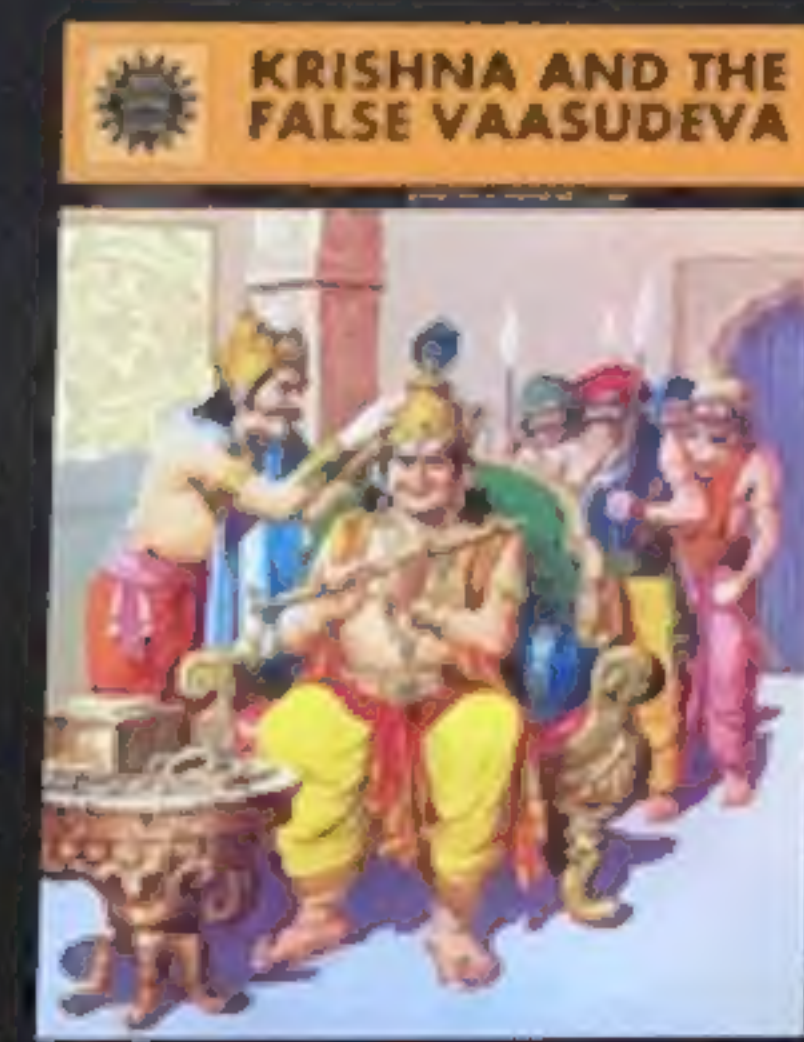
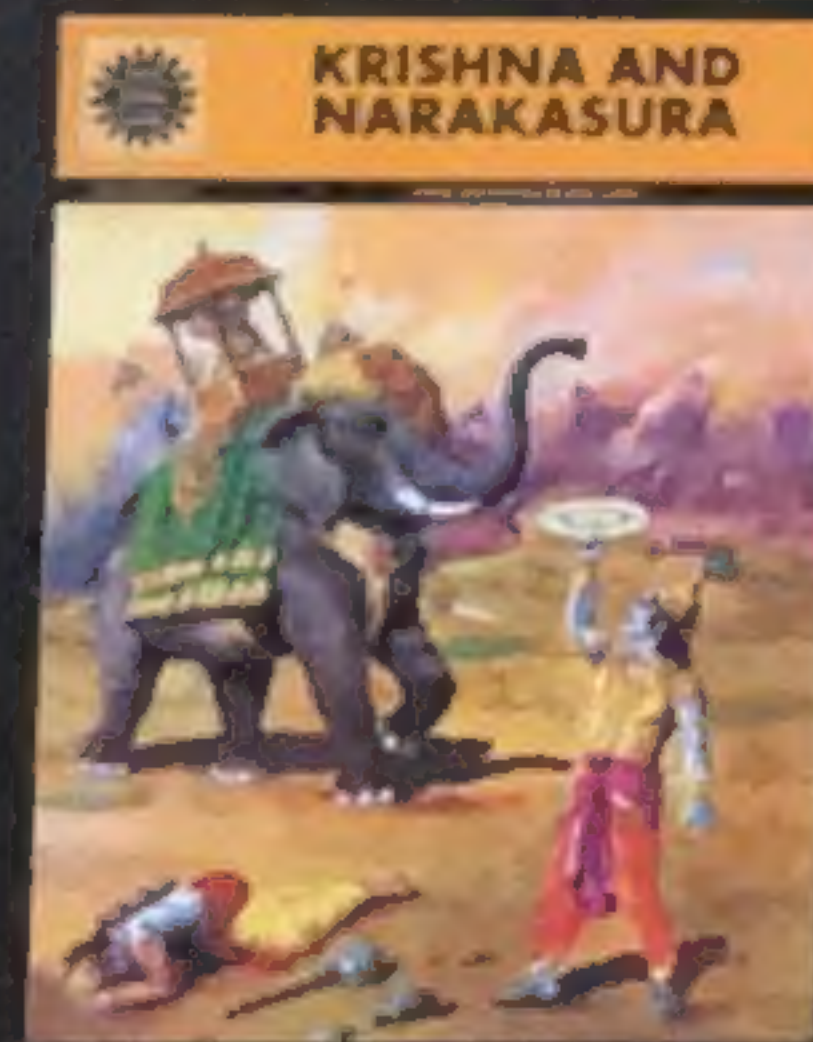


## KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA

Shishupala's mother was shocked when she came to know that her child was destined to be killed by Krishna. She extracted a promise from him that he would forgive Shishupala a hundred offences. As he grew up Shishupala had enough reasons to be angry with Krishna. Especially after he was jilted by Princess Rukmini, in favour of the merry-eyed cowherd. He provoked Krishna repeatedly and was forgiven a hundred times. And then one day Shishupala committed his hundred and first offence.

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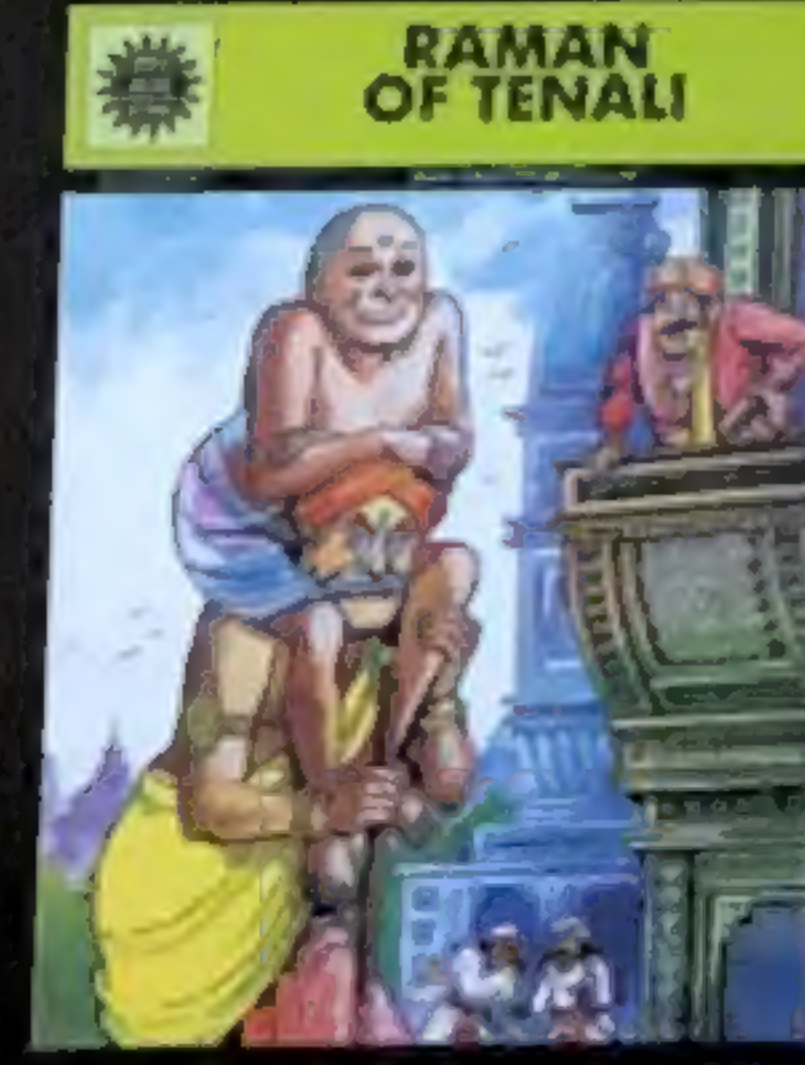
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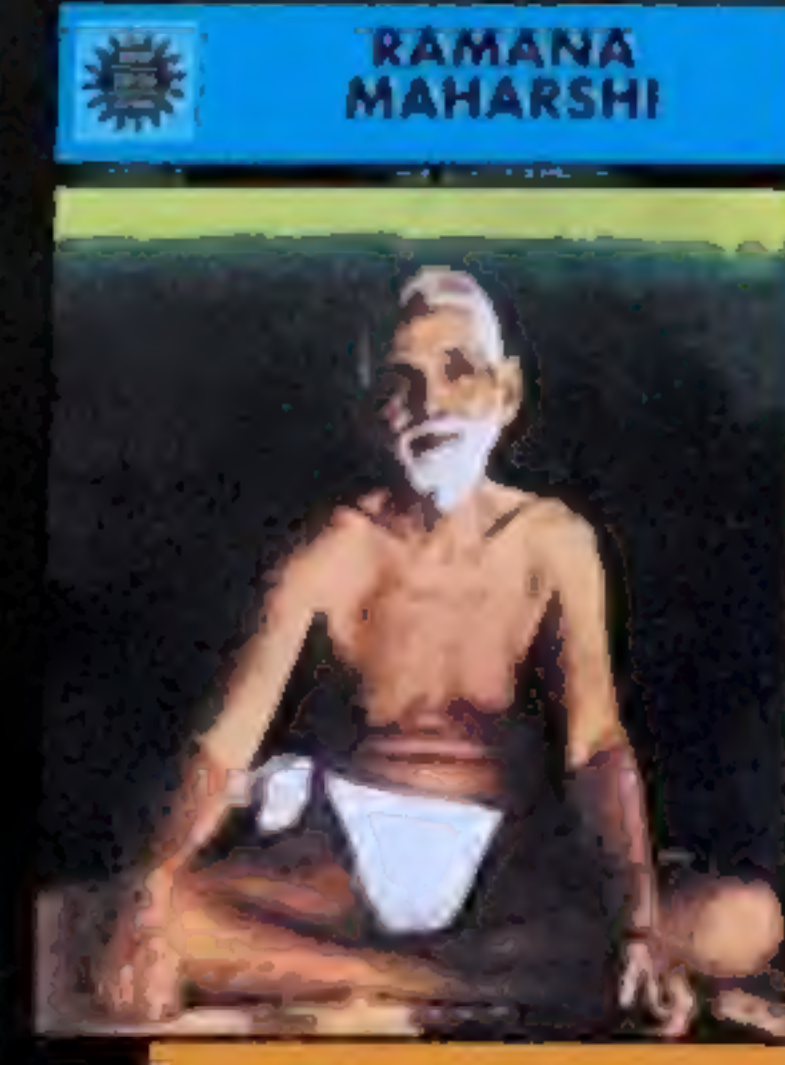
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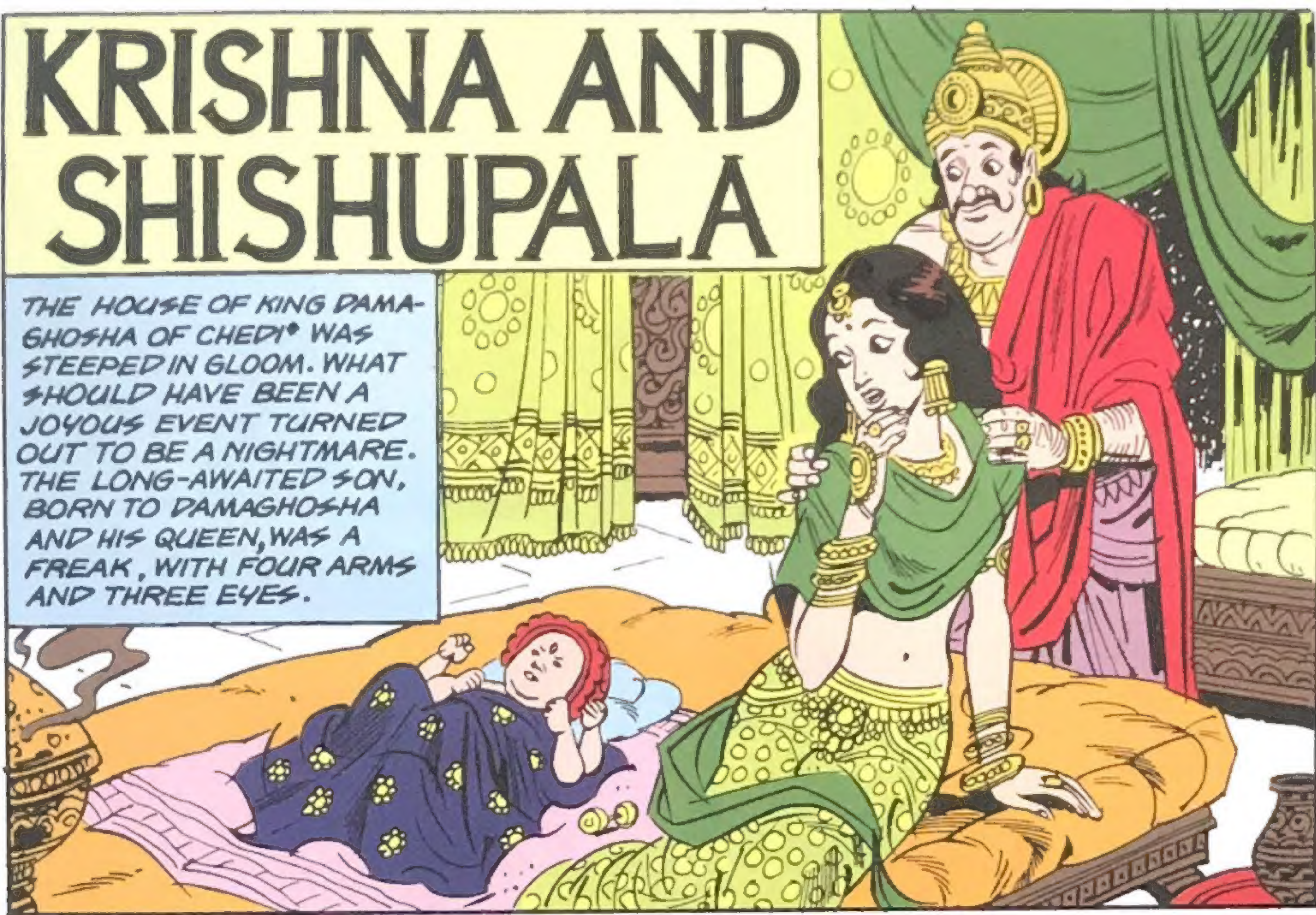
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- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS



# KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA

THE HOUSE OF KING DAMAGHOSHA OF CHEDI WAS STEEPED IN GLOOM. WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A JOYOUS EVENT TURNED OUT TO BE A NIGHTMARE. THE LONG-AWAITED SON, BORN TO DAMAGHOSHA AND HIS QUEEN, WAS A FREAK, WITH FOUR ARMS AND THREE EYES.



AND HE SCREAMED AND BRAYED LIKE AN ASS.

STOP HIM!  
WHAT HAVE WE  
DONE TO DESERVE  
THIS?

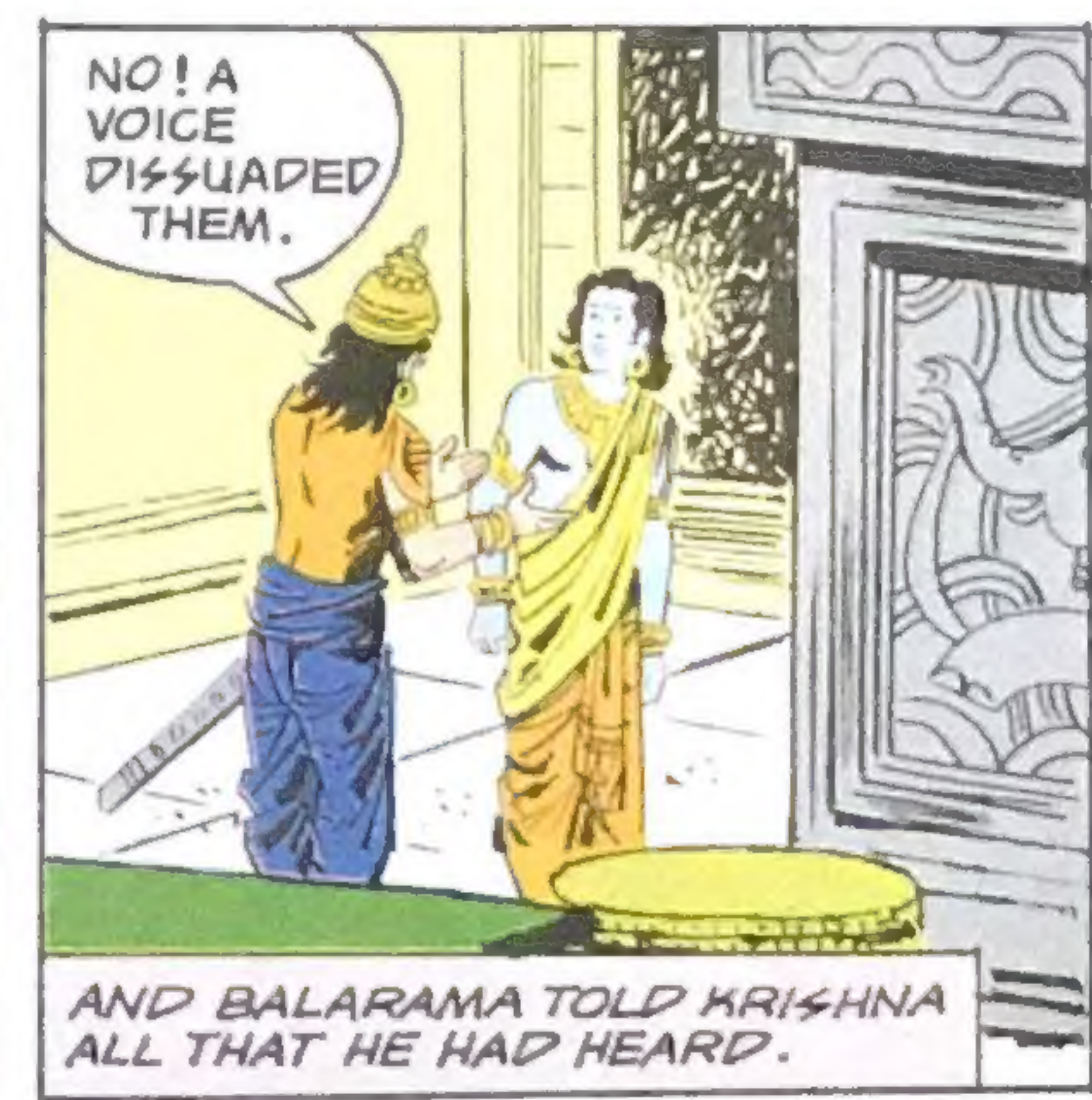
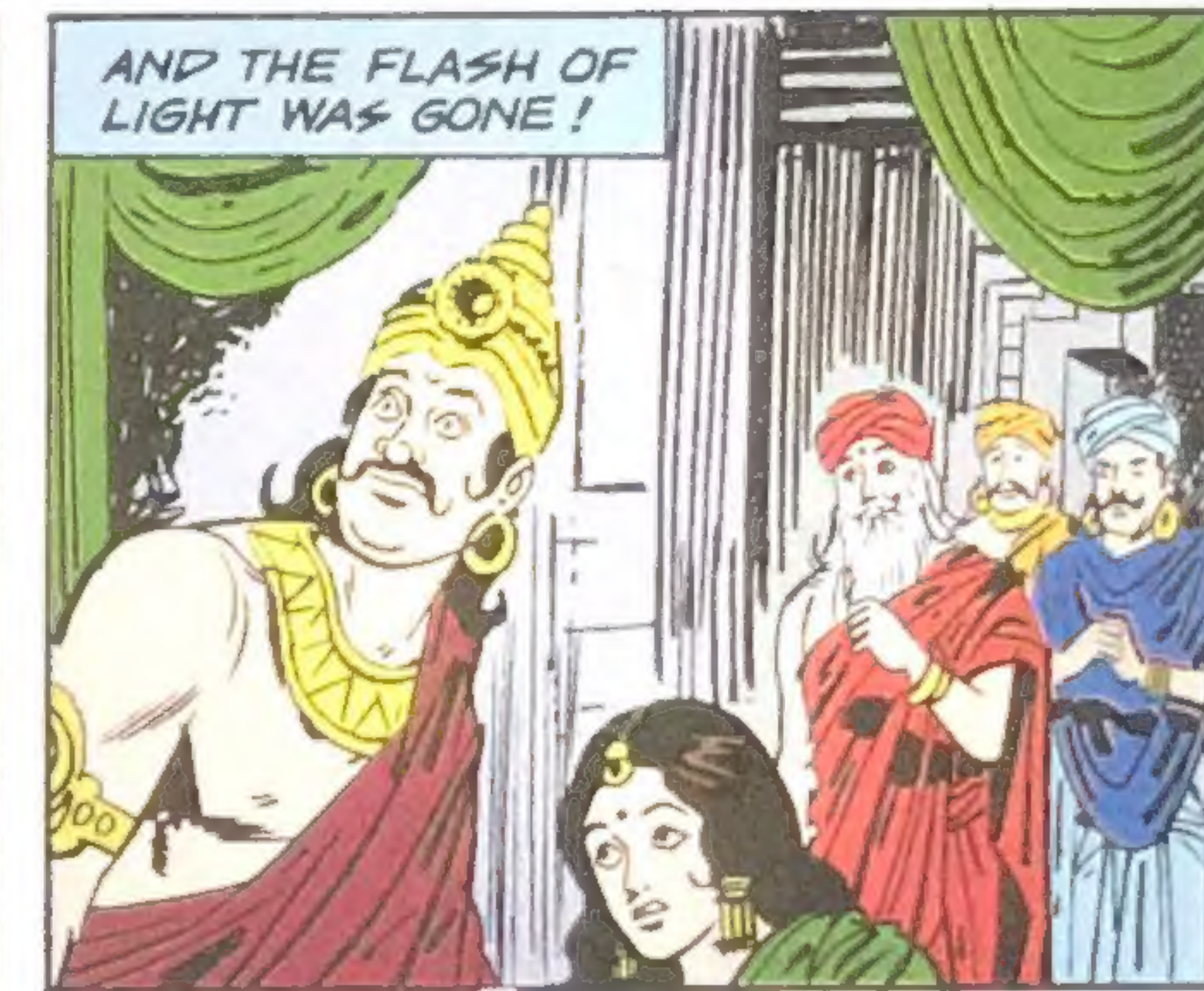
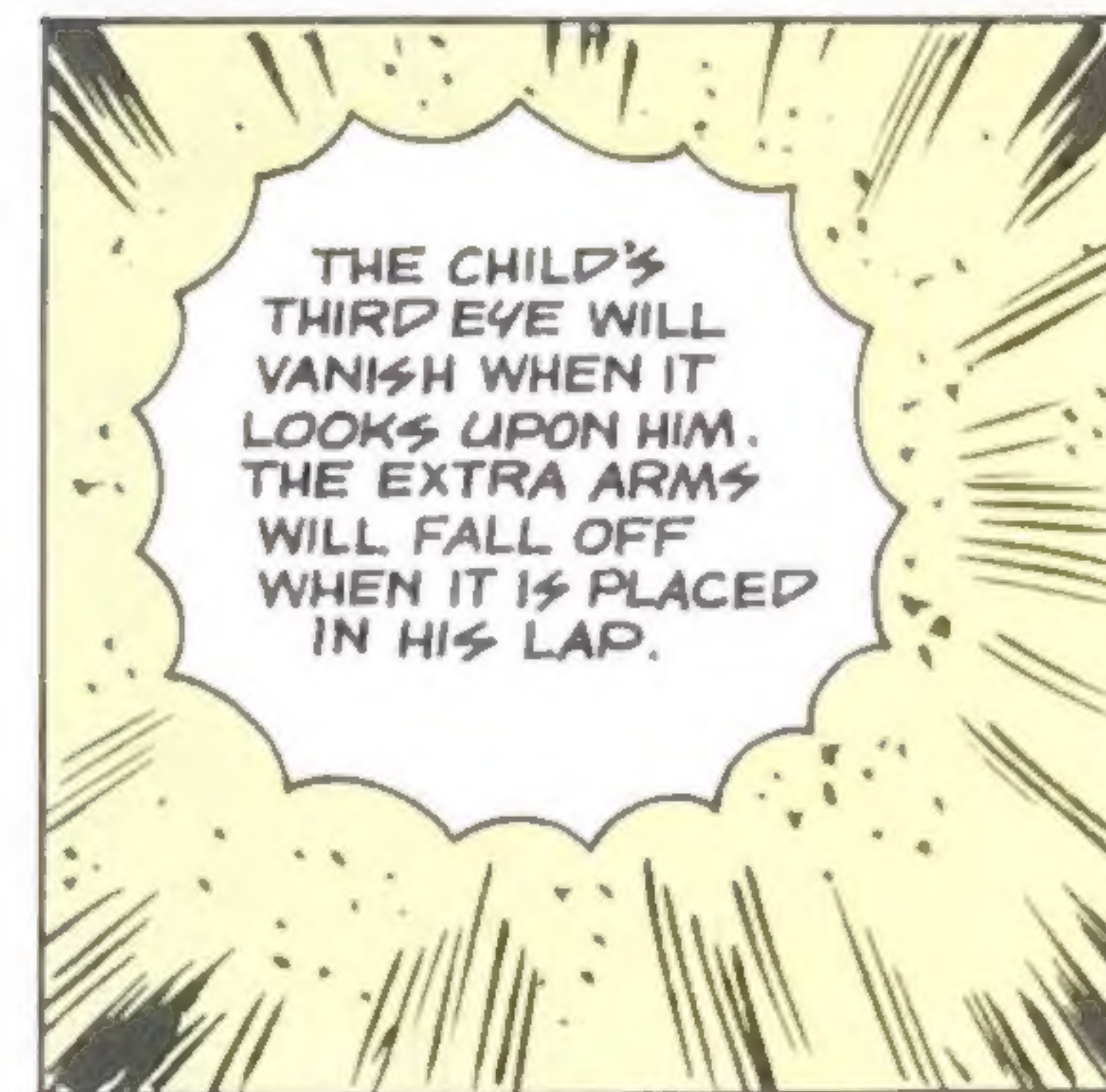
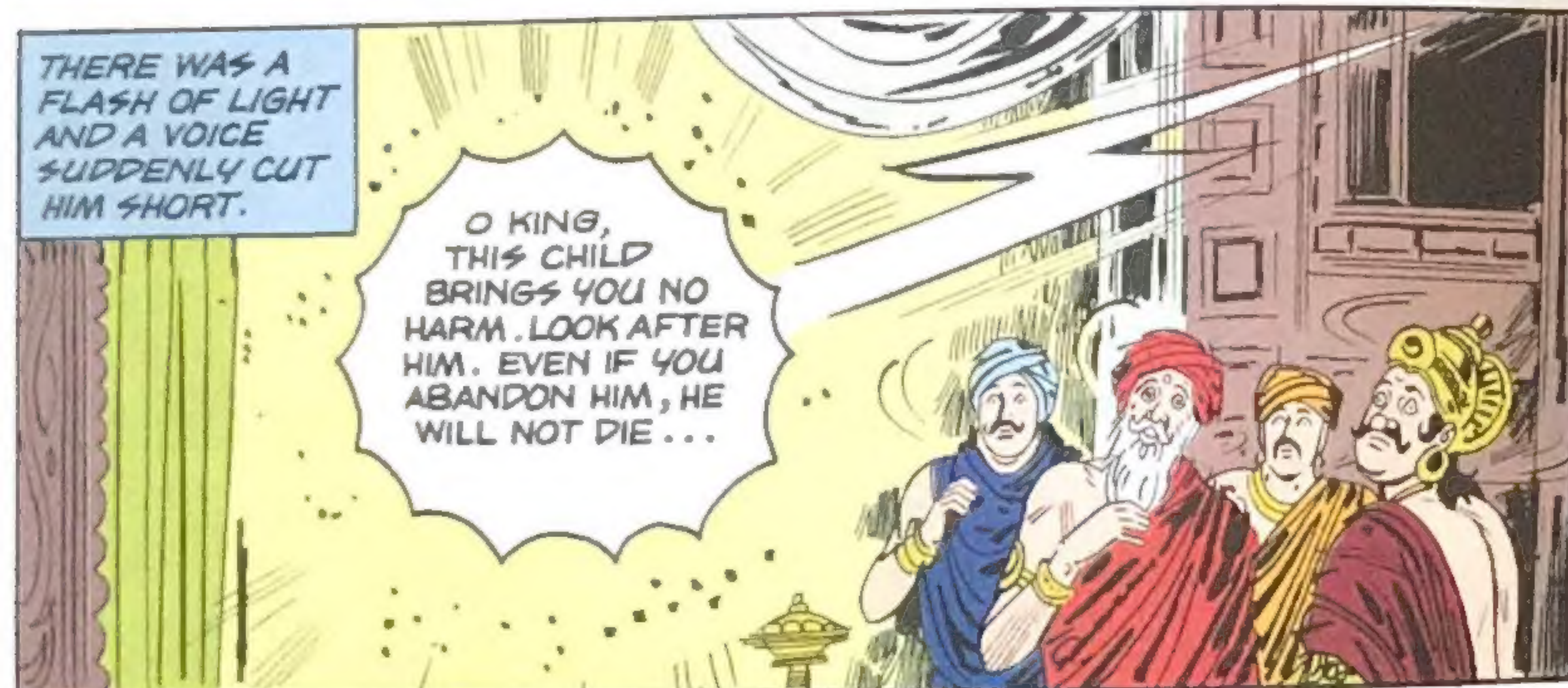


THE  
EVIL OMENS  
FRIGHTEN  
ME.

AH! HERE  
ARE THE PRIESTS  
AND THE ELDERS!  
THEY'LL TELL  
US WHAT TO  
DO.















O KRISHNA,  
I AM AFRAID!  
TERRIBLY  
AFRAID.



WILL YOU  
GRANT ME  
A BOON? YOU  
MUST NOT  
REFUSE!

I'LL TRY  
TO BRING YOU  
WHAT COMFORT  
I CAN.



PROMISE ME  
THAT YOU WILL  
PARDON, FOR  
MY SAKE, ANY  
OFFENCE GIVEN  
BY THIS  
CHILD.

FOR YOUR  
SAKE, I WILL PAR-  
DON HIS OFFENCES  
A HUNDRED TIMES,  
SO DON'T GRIEVE.



HE WILL PARDON  
HIM A HUNDRED  
TIMES! MY SON  
IS SAFE!



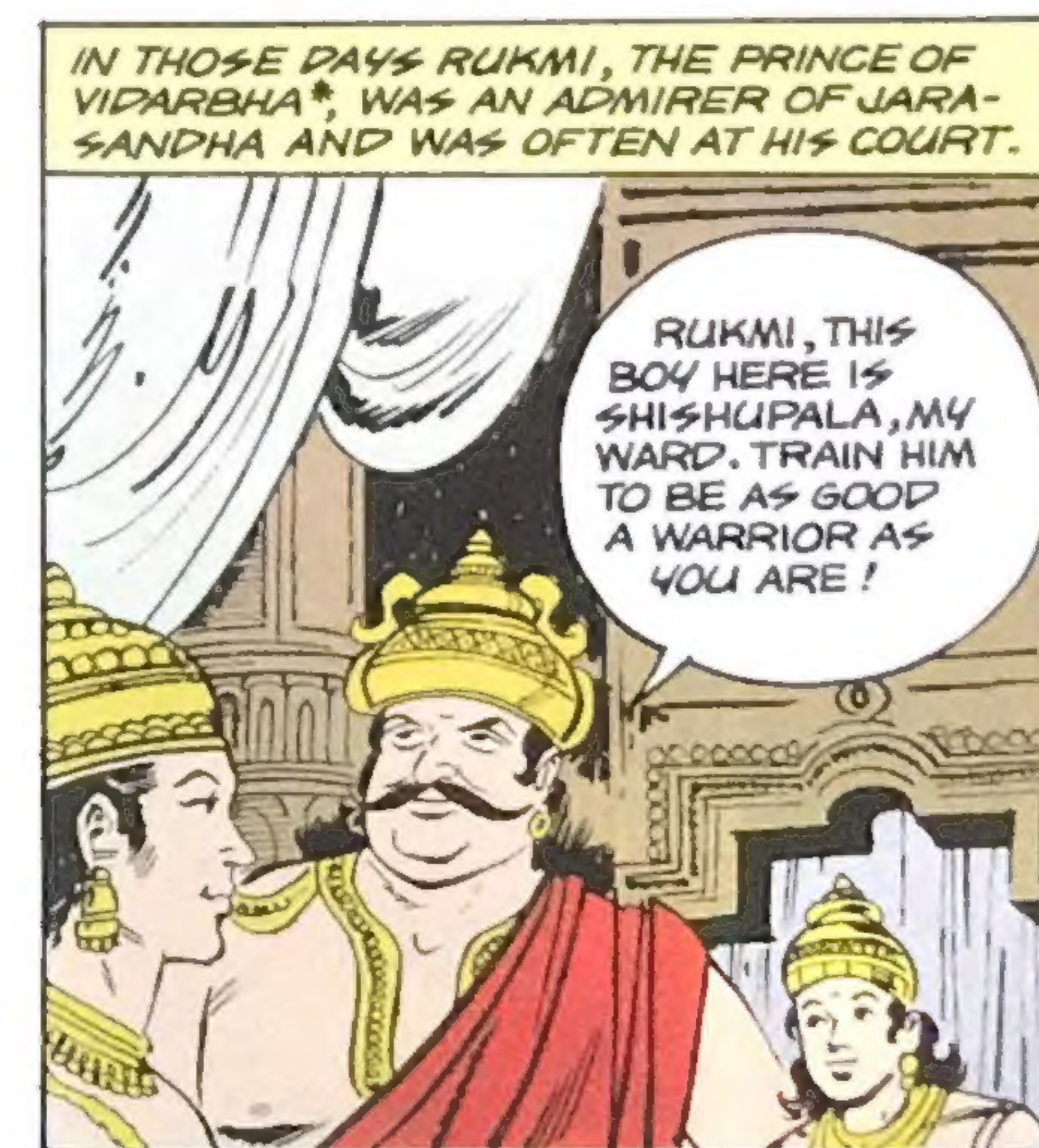
BUT DAMAGHOSHA WAS  
NOT SO CERTAIN. LONG  
AFTER KRISHNA AND  
BALARAMA LEFT HE  
WAS DEEP IN THOUGHT.

THE MIGHT OF KRISHNA  
IS MATCHED BY NONE BUT  
JARASANDHA, WHO IS NOW  
KRISHNA'S SWORN ENEMY.  
MY SON SHALL GROW UP  
AT THE COURT OF  
MAGADHA.



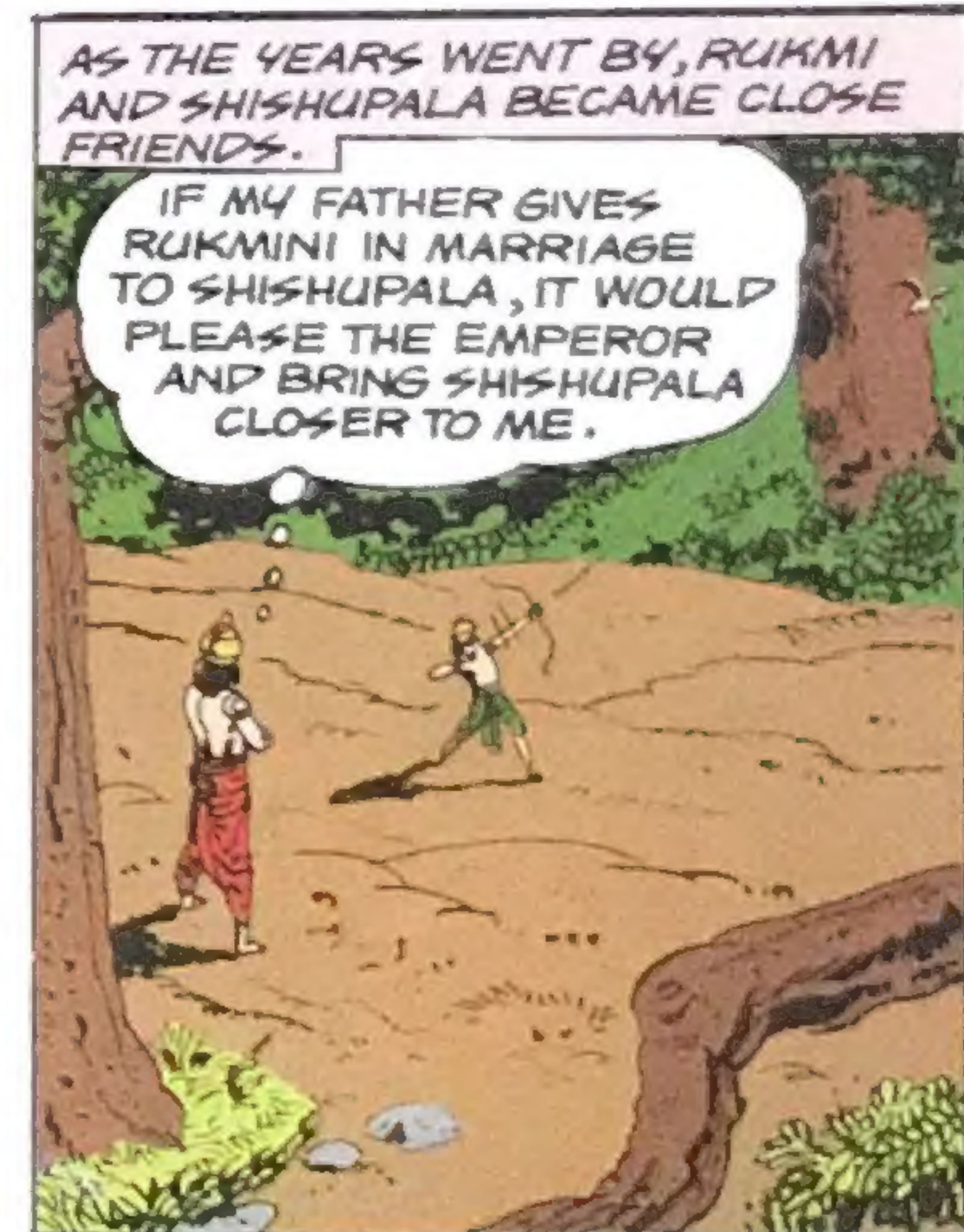
SO SHISHUPALA, AS  
THE CHILD WAS NAMED,  
WAS SENT TO MAGADHA.

A FINE  
BOY INDEED!  
I SHALL MAKE  
YOU A LION  
AMONG MEN.



IN THOSE DAYS RUKMI, THE PRINCE OF  
VIDARBHA\*, WAS AN ADMIRER OF JARA-  
SANDHA AND WAS OFTEN AT HIS COURT.

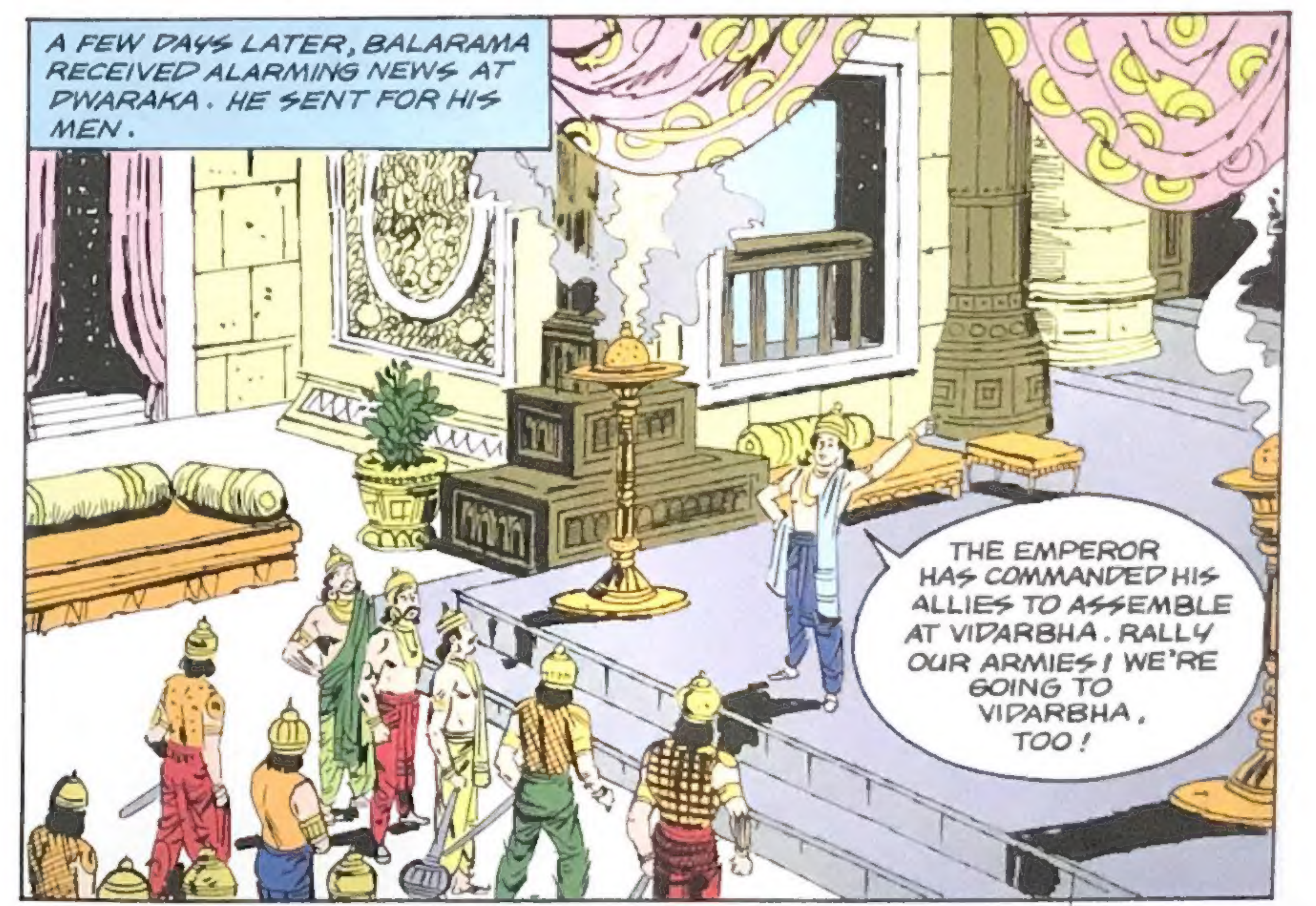
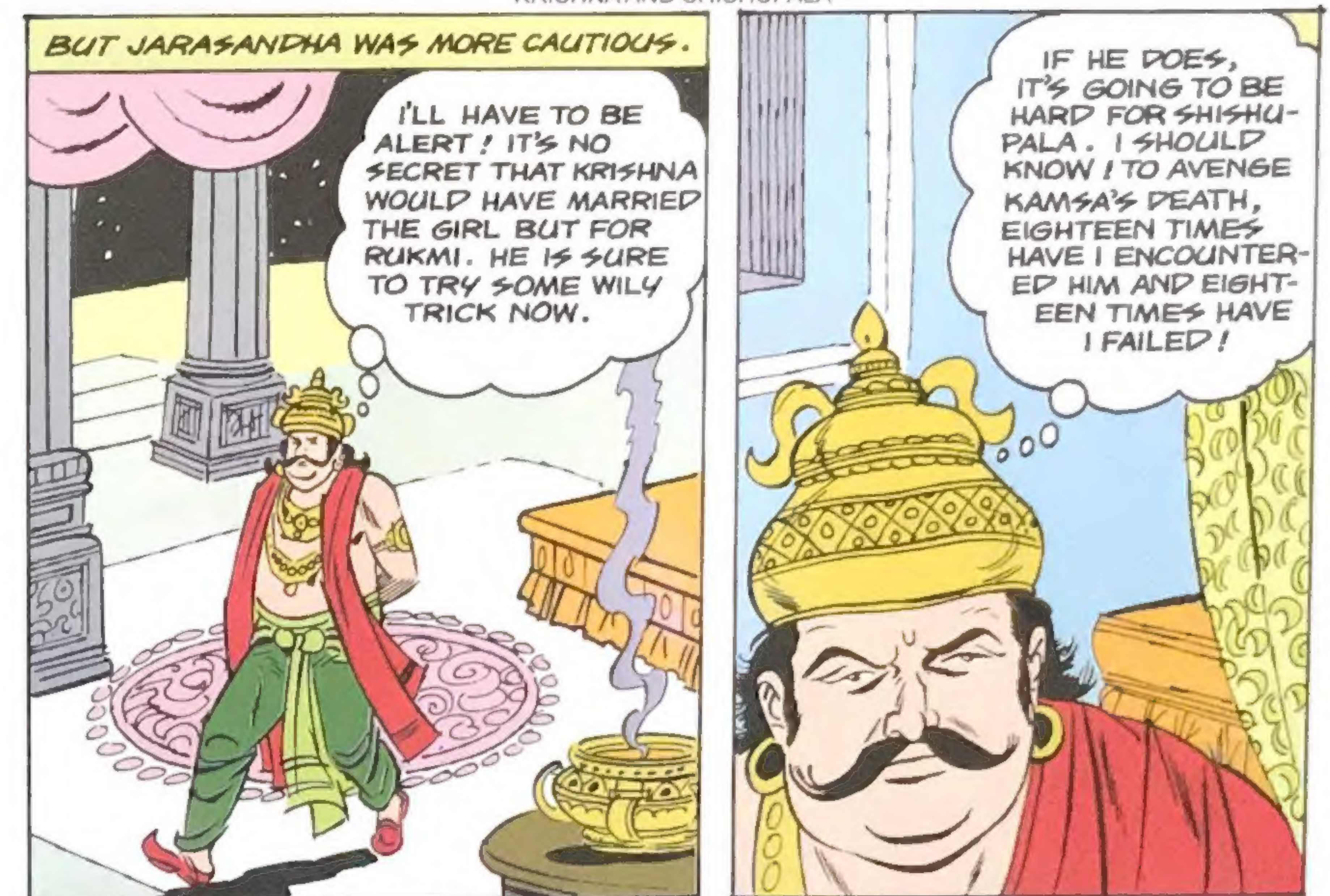
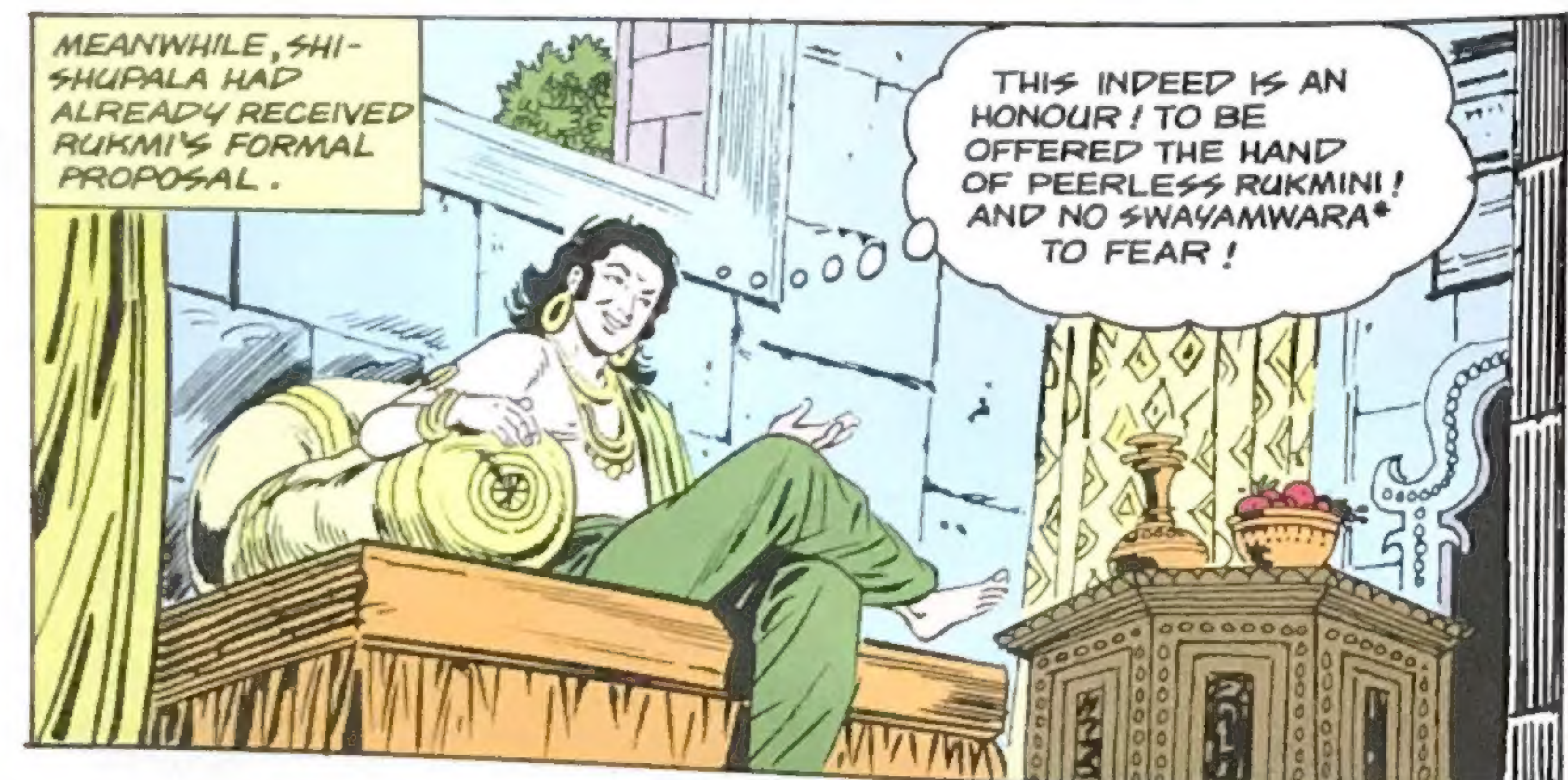
RUKMI, THIS  
BOY HERE IS  
SHISHUPALA, MY  
WARD. TRAIN HIM  
TO BE AS GOOD  
A WARRIOR AS  
YOU ARE!



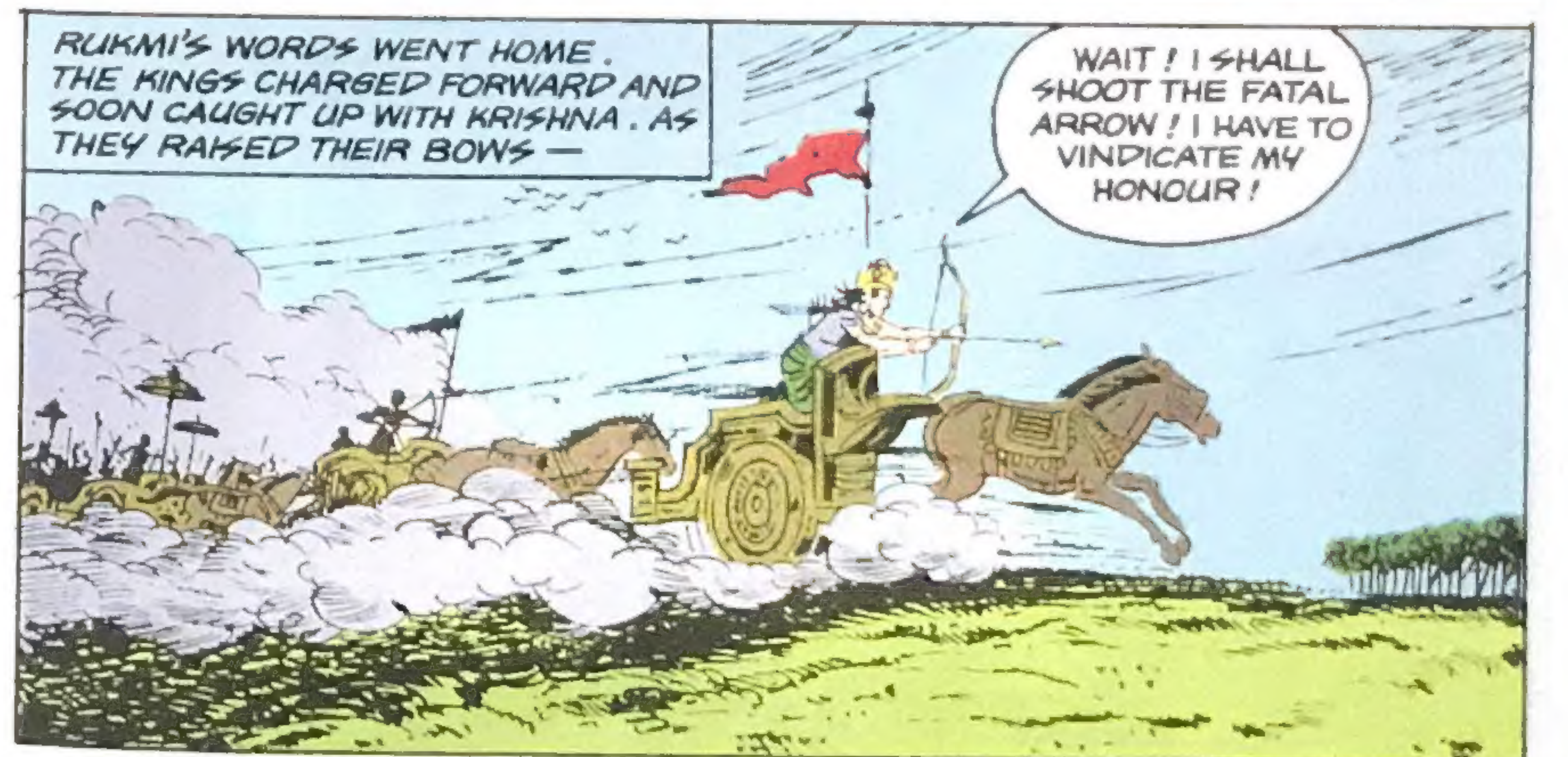
AS THE YEARS WENT BY, RUKMI  
AND SHISHUPALA BECAME CLOSE  
FRIENDS.

IF MY FATHER GIVES  
RUKMINI IN MARRIAGE  
TO SHISHUPALA, IT WOULD  
PLEASE THE EMPEROR  
AND BRING SHISHUPALA  
CLOSER TO ME.

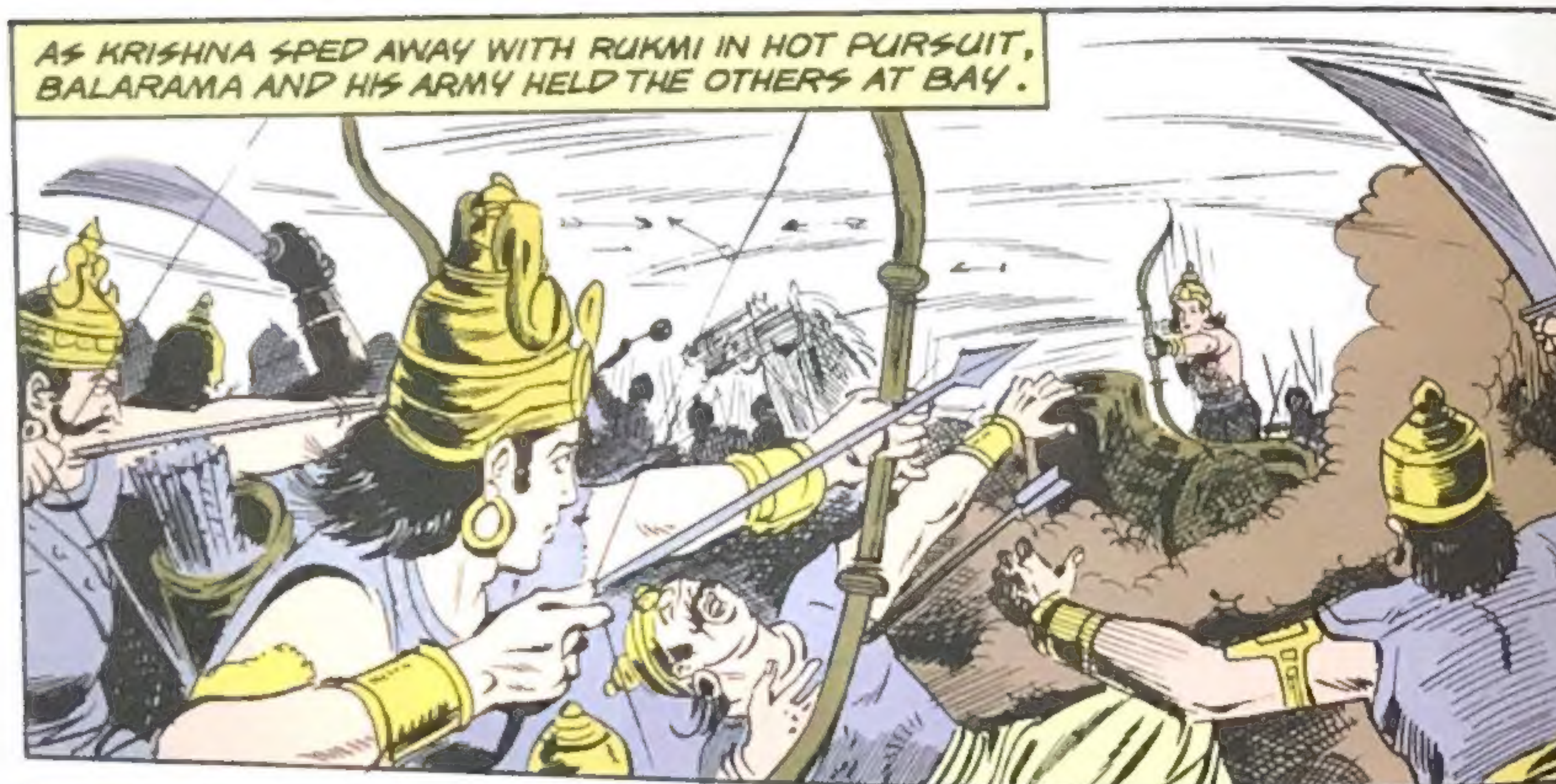
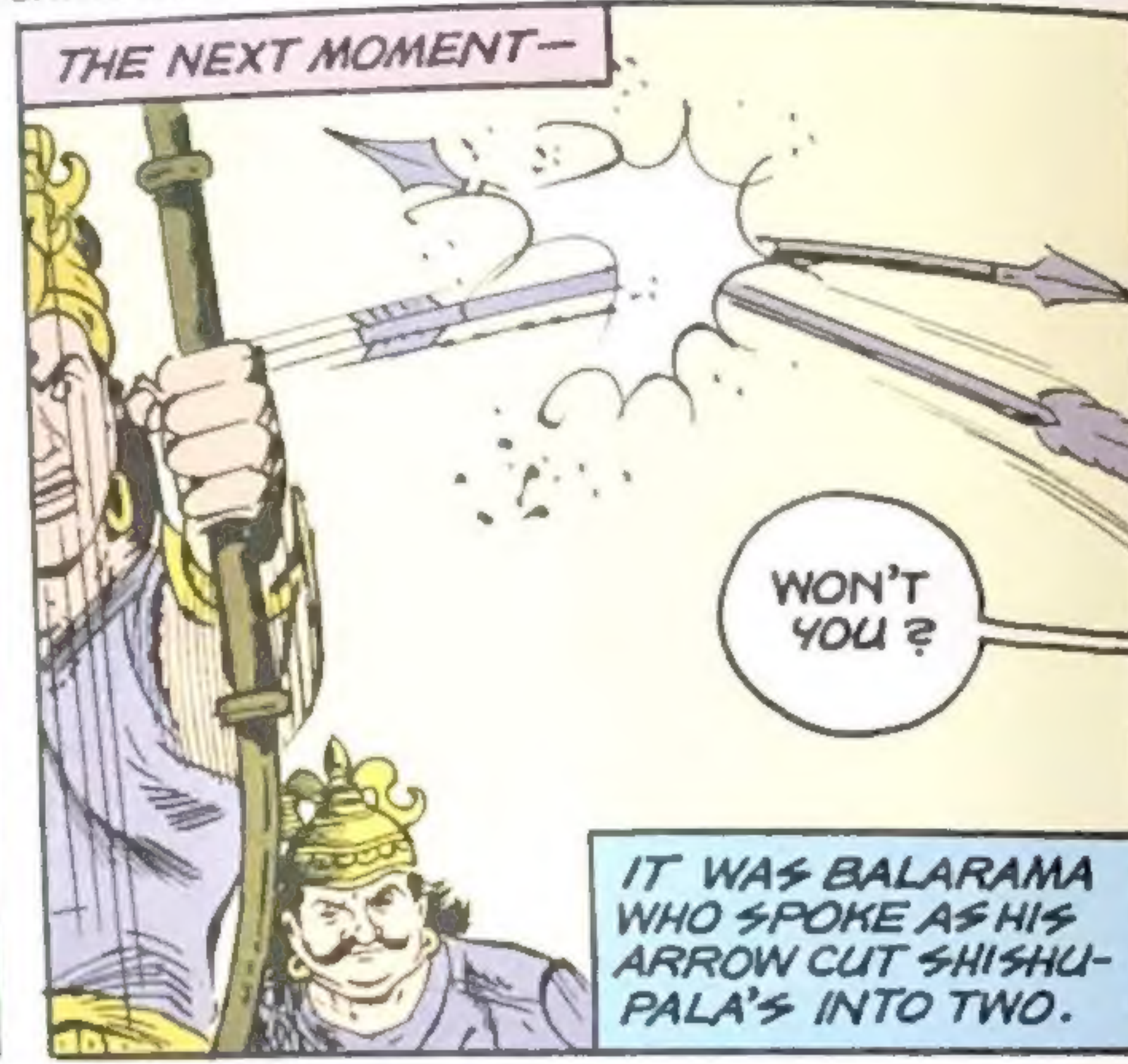














DANTAVAKTRA, ANOTHER VASSAL, SUPPORTED HIM.

AND HE'LL DO IT! COME, SHISHUPALA. DON'T GRIEVE.

TRYING TO CONSOLE THE DISTRAUGHT SUITOR AND BURNING WITH HATRED FOR HIS RIVAL ALL THE WHILE, THE VANQUISHED RETURNED TO THEIR CAPITALS.

AS HIS FATHER WAS NOW BEGINNING TO AGE, SHISHUPALA RETURNED TO CHEDI. WHEN HE ENTERED THE CAPITAL —

I HAD HOPED TO RETURN WITH A CHERISHED BRIDE BUT ALL I HAVE BROUGHT HOME IS HUMILIATION.

UNDER JARASANDHA'S PROTECTION, IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, SHISHUPALA OFTEN DELIBERATELY COMMITTED OFFENCES AGAINST THE YADAVAS — BUT ESCAPED UNPUNISHED.

HERE IS THAT RAT, SHISHUPALA! LET'S KILL HIM.

LET HIM GO, BALARAMA. REMEMBER MY PROMISE TO HIS MOTHER.

THEN ONE DAY, ONE OF SHISHUPALA'S SPIES CAME WITH NEWS.

EMPEROR JARASANDHA HAS BEEN SLAIN!

OH, NO! WHO WAS THE WICKED MURDERER? THAT MIGHTY WARRIOR COULD NOT HAVE BEEN SLAIN IN A FAIR FIGHT.

THOUGH IT WAS PLANNED BY KRISHNA AND THE PANDAVAS, THE ACTUAL KILLING WAS BHIMA'S WORK.

THE FOUL DEED WAS DONE BY A PANDAVA! MY MOTHER'S SISTER'S CHILD! BUT WHAT DID HE HAVE AGAINST THE EMPEROR?

KING YUDHISHTHIRA WANTED TO PERFORM THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE, FOR WHICH HE WOULD FIRST HAVE TO SECURE THE TITLE OF EMPEROR. JARASANDHA WAS THE ONLY OBSTACLE IN HIS PATH.

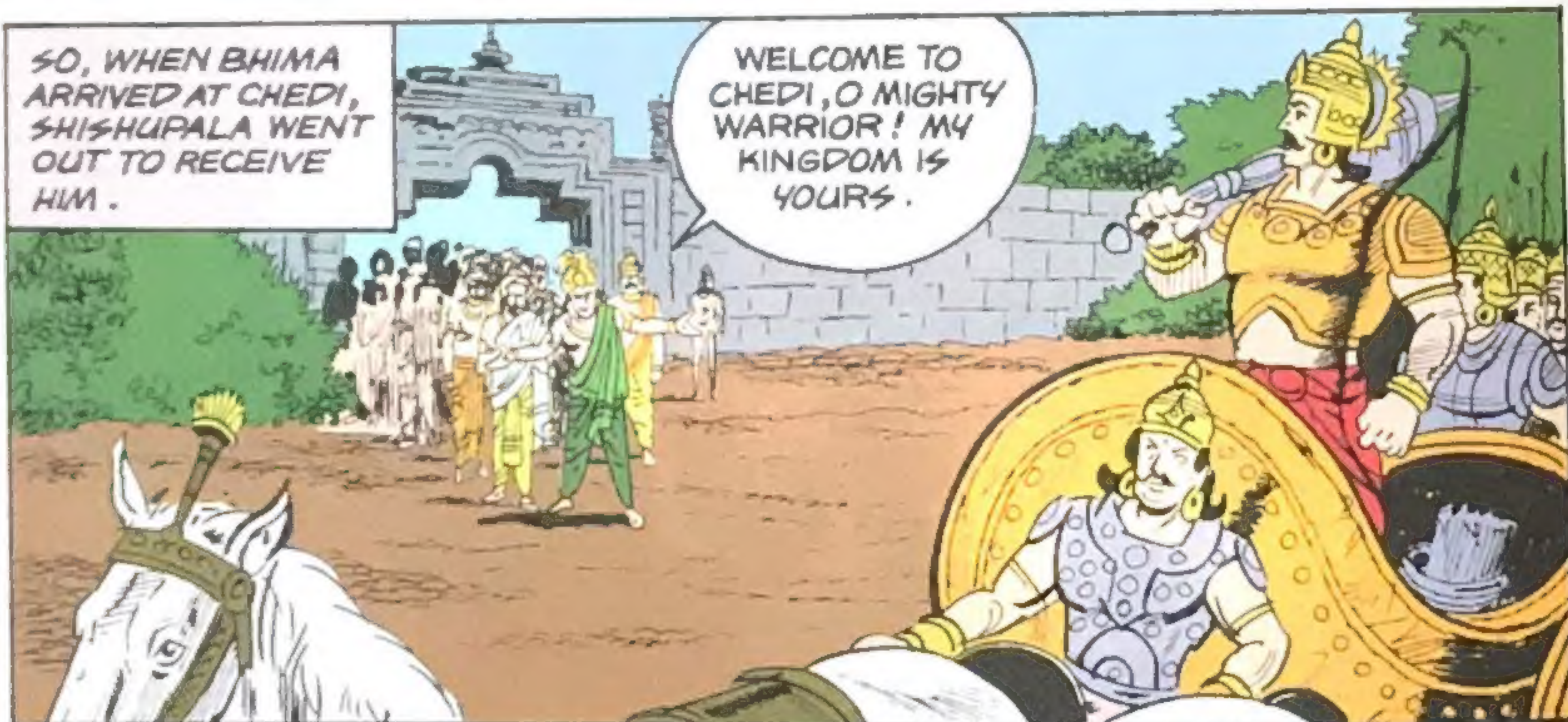
YUDHISHTHIRA'S FOUR BROTHERS, BHIMA, ARJUNA, NAKULA AND SAHADEVA, ARE NOW ON THEIR WAY TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH TO SUBDUCE THE KINGS. BHIMA WILL SOON BE COMING TO CHEDI.





SO, WHEN BHIMA ARRIVED AT CHEDI, SHISHUPALA WENT OUT TO RECEIVE HIM.

WELCOME TO CHEDI, O MIGHTY WARRIOR! MY KINGDOM IS YOURS.



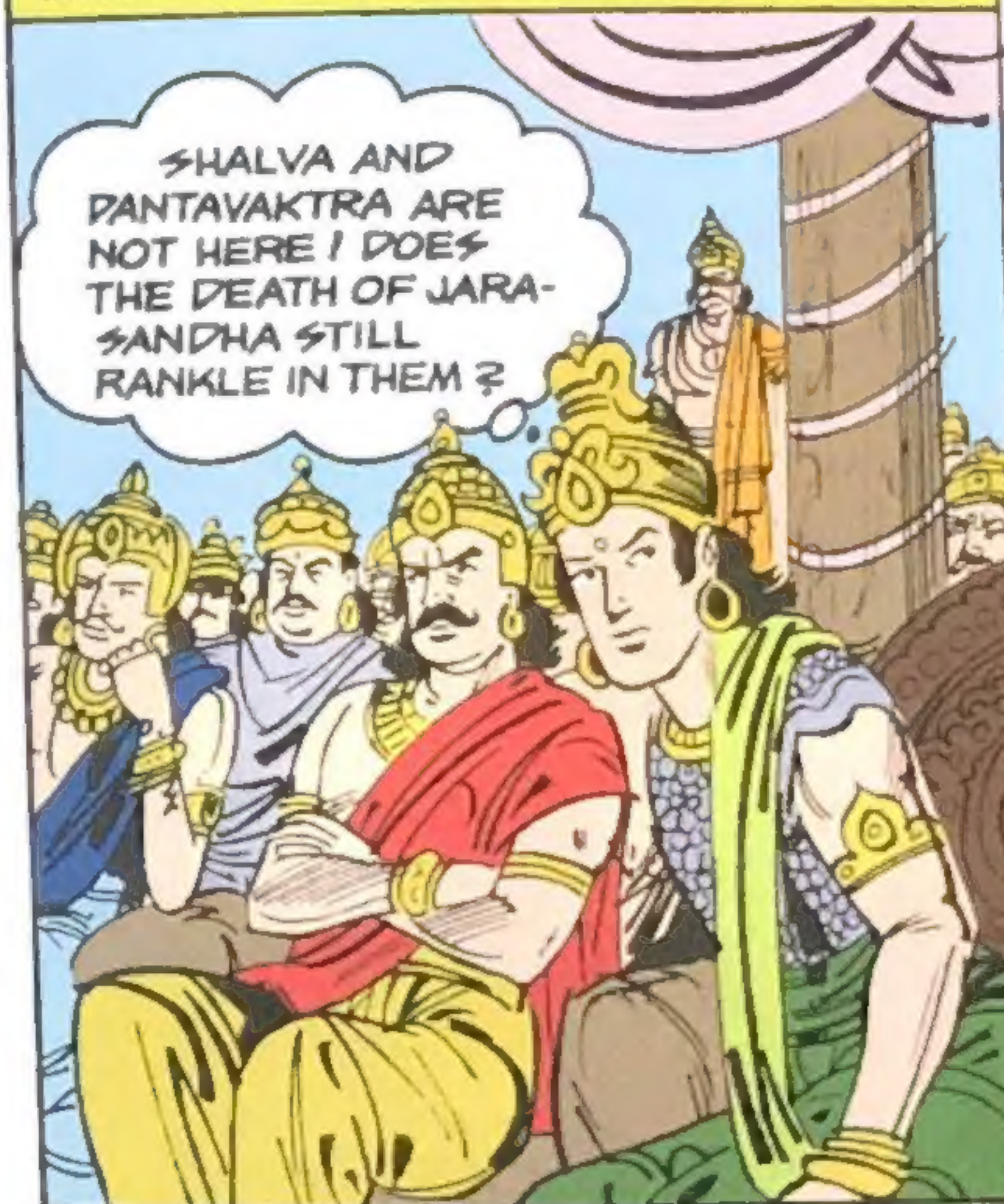
SURPRISED AND DELIGHTED BY THE WARM RECEPTION WHERE HE HAD EXPECTED HOSTILITY, BHIMA STAYED ON AT CHEDI FOR A MONTH, ENJOYING SHISHUPALA'S HOSPITALITY.



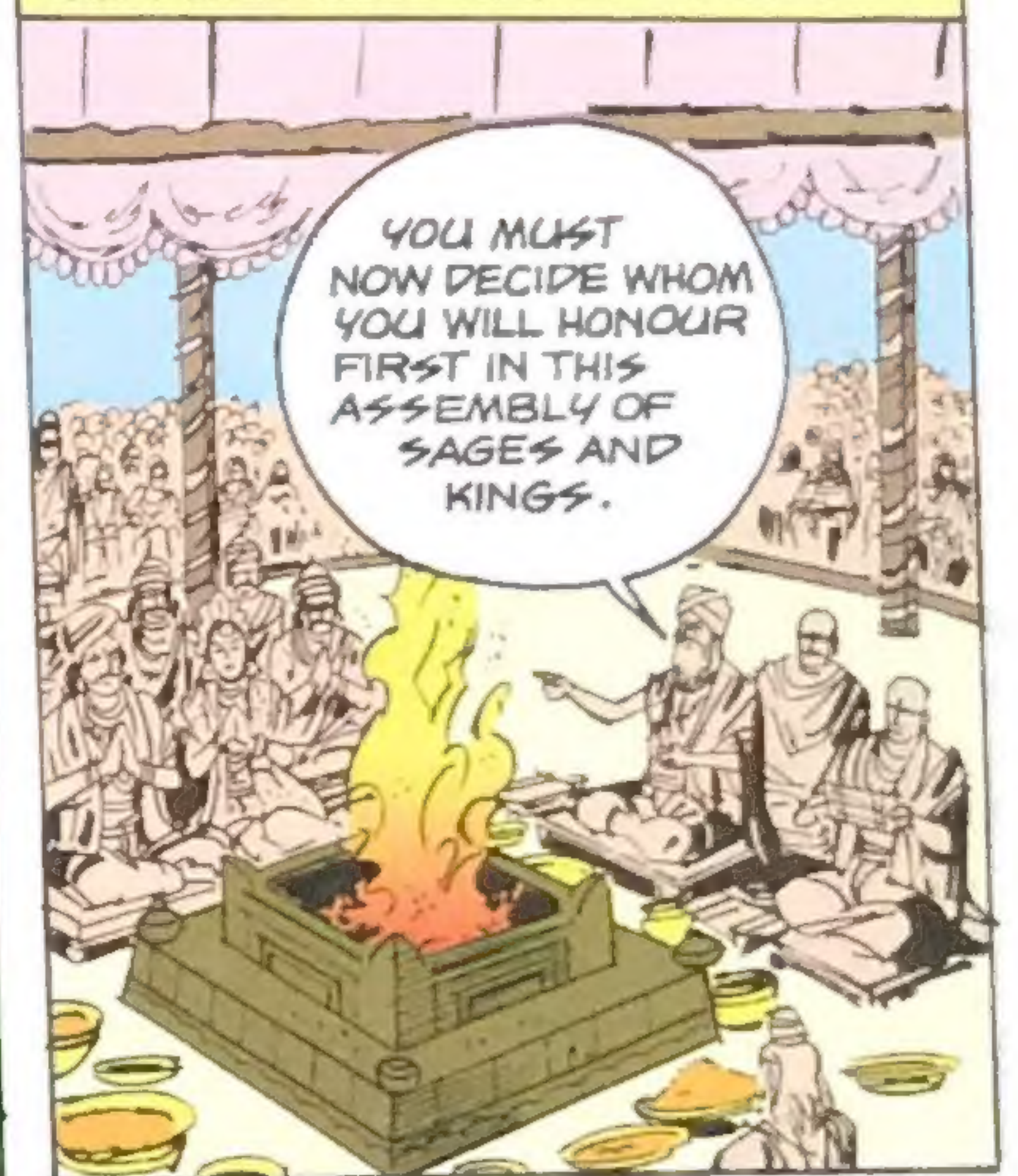
WHEN THE BROTHERS RETURNED HAVING BROUGHT ALL THE MAJOR KINGS UNDER HIS SWAY, SOME WILLINGLY, SOME BY FORCE, YUDHISHTHIRA SET A DATE FOR THE GRAND SACRIFICE IN CONSULTATION WITH KRISHNA AND THE ROYAL PRIESTS.



AT LAST THE GREAT DAY ARRIVED. THE SACRED RITUALS BEGAN. AS SHISHUPALA TOOK THE SEAT ASSIGNED TO HIM —



THE OFFICIATING PRIESTS GUIDED YUDHISHTHIRA THROUGH THE CEREMONIES TO THE FINAL DAY WHEN THE SOMA JUICE WAS EXTRACTED.



YUDHISHTHIRA WAS AT A LOSS. HE HAD THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING BUT THIS.



WHEN YUDHISHTHIRA DID NOT SPEAK, SAHADEVA, THE YOUNGEST PANDAVA, STOOD UP.





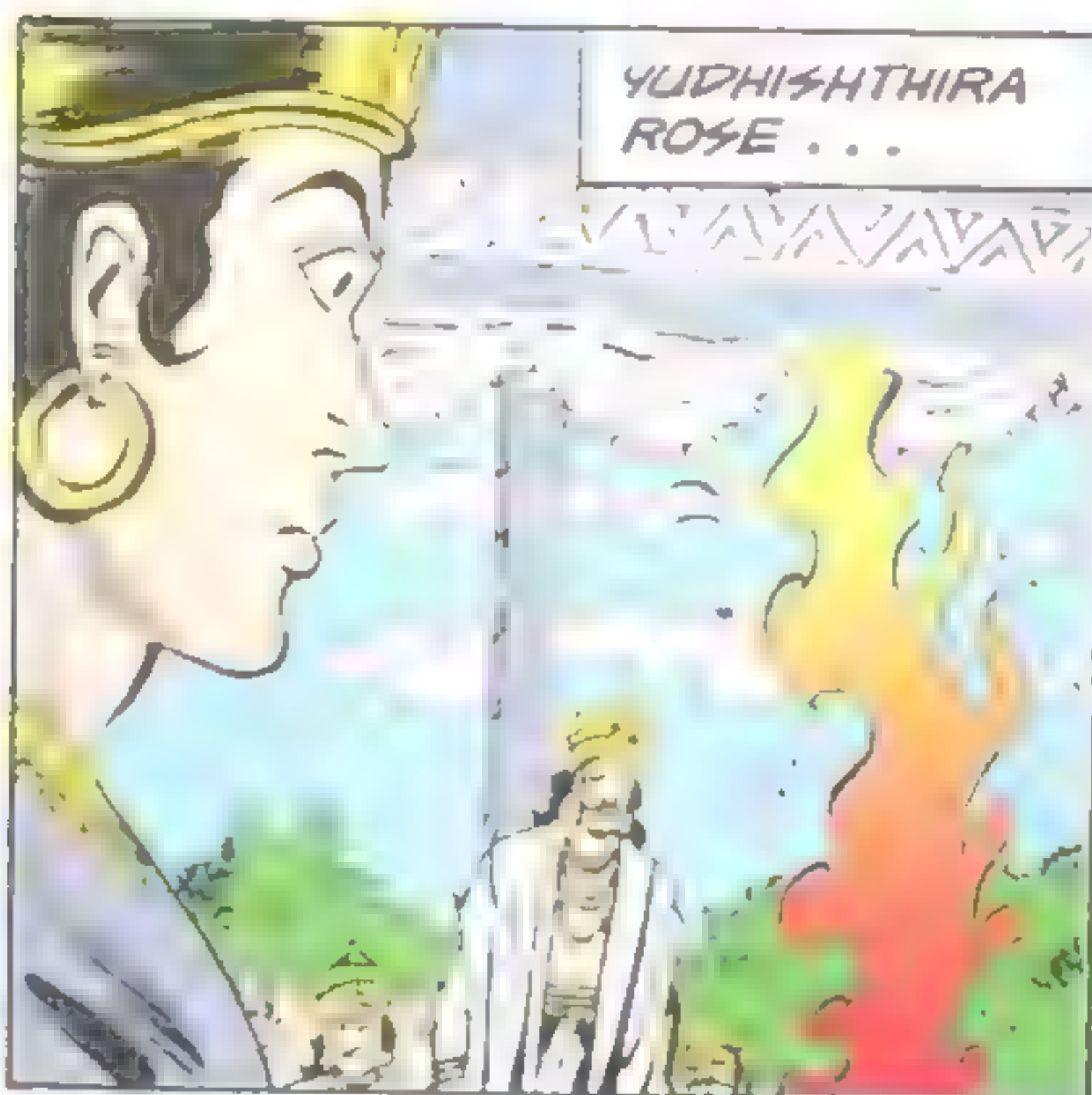
AS YUDHISHTHIRA WAITED TENSELY FOR THE REACTION OF THE ASSEMBLY—



HEAR!  
HEAR!

WELL  
CHOSEN.

DEAR,  
DEAR KRISHNA!  
THOUGH NO ONE  
DESERVES THIS  
HONOUR MORE  
THAN YOU DO, IT  
IS GOOD TO SEE  
THAT EVERY-  
BODY APPROVES.



YUDHISHTHIRA  
ROSE ...



... WASHED THE FEET OF  
KRISHNA...

... AND, AS WAS THE CUSTOM, SPRINKLED  
THE WATER IN WHICH HIS FEET HAD BEEN  
WASHED ON THE HEADS OF DRAUPADI AND  
HIS BROTHERS.



AS THE ASSEMBLY CHEERED  
LOUDLY, SHISHUPALA GREW LIVID  
WITH RAGE.



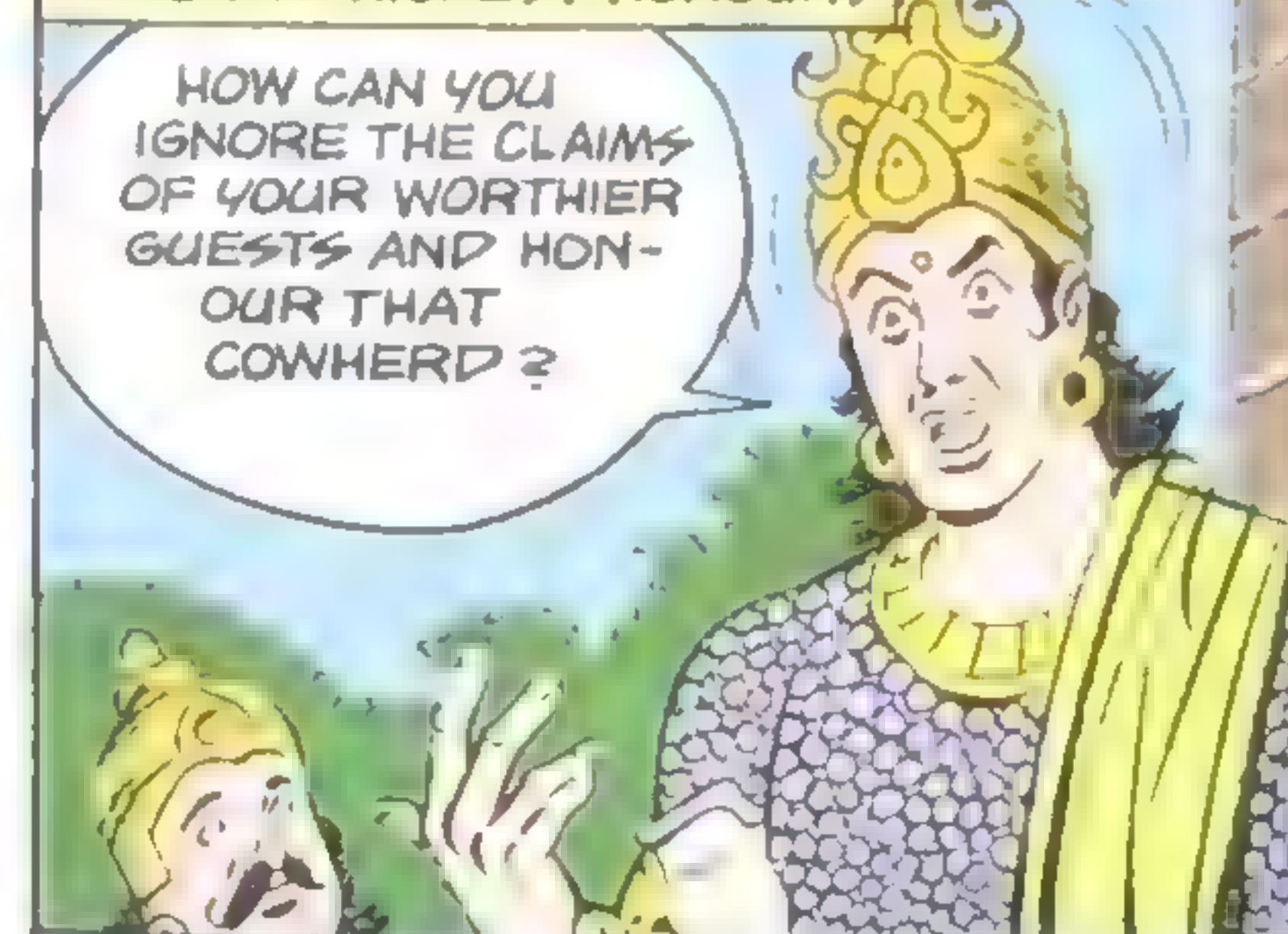
JAI!  
JAI!

SUDDENLY HIS VOICE CUT SHARPLY  
THROUGH THE CHEERS.



WAIT! HOW CAN  
YOU, THE ELDERS,  
THE WISE MEN OF  
THIS ASSEMBLY,  
SUCCUMB TO THE  
WHIMS OF A MERE  
BOY?

IT WAS SHISHUPALA. HE COULD NOT  
BEAR TO SEE HIS WORST ENEMY RECEI-  
VING THE HIGHEST HONOUR.



HOW CAN YOU  
IGNORE THE CLAIMS  
OF YOUR WORTHIER  
GUESTS AND HON-  
OUR THAT  
COWHERD?

FEEDING HIS FURY WITH EACH  
ABUSE, SHISHUPALA WENT ON.

ABANDONING THEIR OWN  
KINGDOM, THE YADAVAS HAVE  
TAKEN REFUGE IN AN ISLAND  
WHICH HAS NO BRAHMAN — NO  
VEDIC STUDIES. FROM THAT  
HIDEOUT THEY TYRANNISE  
VIRTUOUS KINGS.

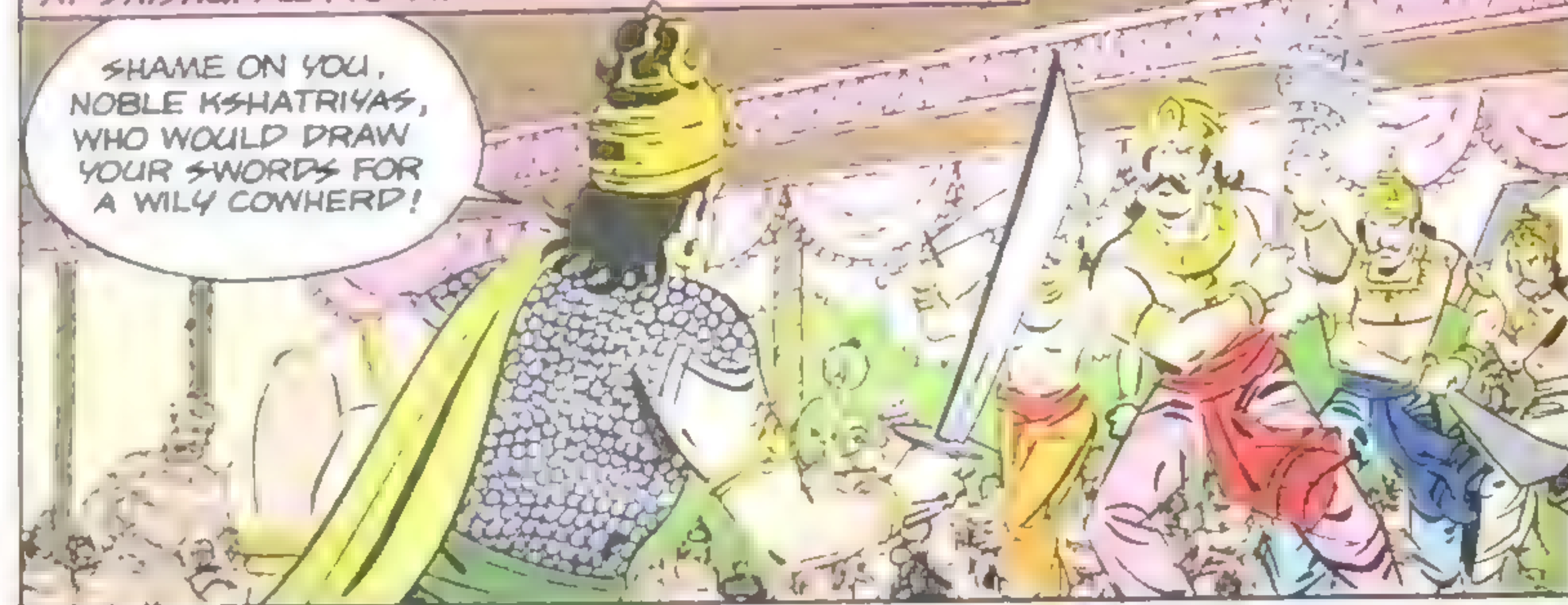


HOW CAN ONE OF  
THIS BARBAROUS  
RACE BE WORTHY  
OF HONOUR, PARTI-  
CULARLY IN THIS  
AUGUST  
ASSEMBLY?

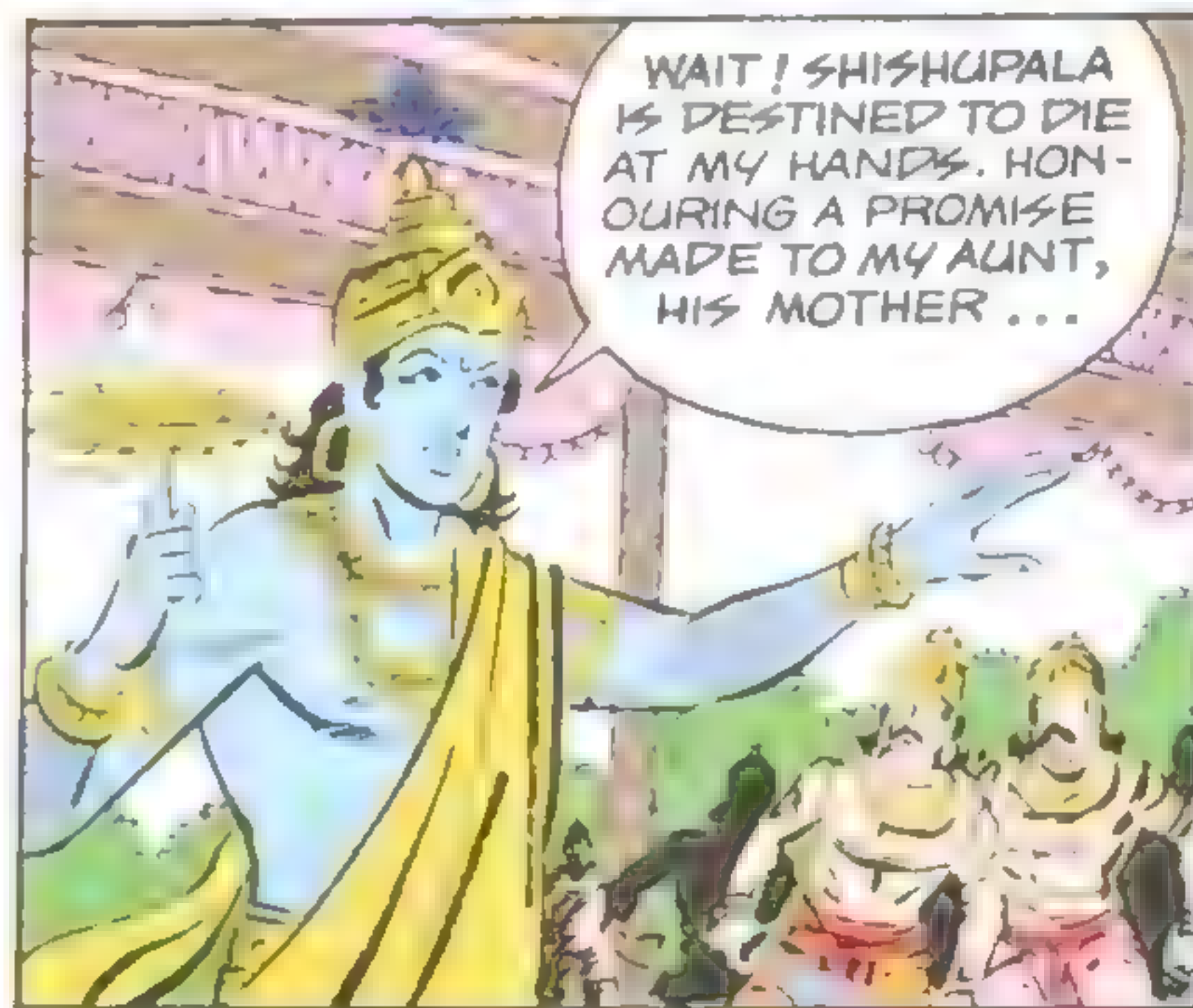
WHY  
DOESN'T  
KRISHNA  
STOP THIS  
MADMAN?



WHEN THE PANDAVAS AND THEIR ALLIES CHARGED AT SHISHUPALA TO SILENCE HIM —



SHAME ON YOU, NOBLE KSHATRIYAS, WHO WOULD DRAW YOUR SWORDS FOR A WILY COWHERD!



WAIT! SHISHUPALA IS DESTINED TO DIE AT MY HANDS. HONOURING A PROMISE MADE TO MY AUNT, HIS MOTHER ...



... I HAVE PARDONED HIM A HUNDRED TIMES. HE HAS NOW EXCEEDED THAT NUMBER. HIS TIME IS UP.



SEEING THEIR SUZERAIN FALL, THE VASSAL CHIEFTAINS OF CHEDI FLED FOR THEIR LIVES.



QUICK! LET US ESCAPE AND CARRY THE NEWS TO SHALVA.

I'LL STAY BEHIND AND BRING NEWS OF THEIR PLANS.

WHEN THE CHIEFTAINS WHO HAD FLED, REACHED SHALVA'S COURT —



SHISHUPALA HAS BEEN SLAIN!

IT WAS THAT VILE YADAVA COWHERD, KRISHNA, WHO DID IT.

SORROW AND ANGER OVERCAME SHALVA.



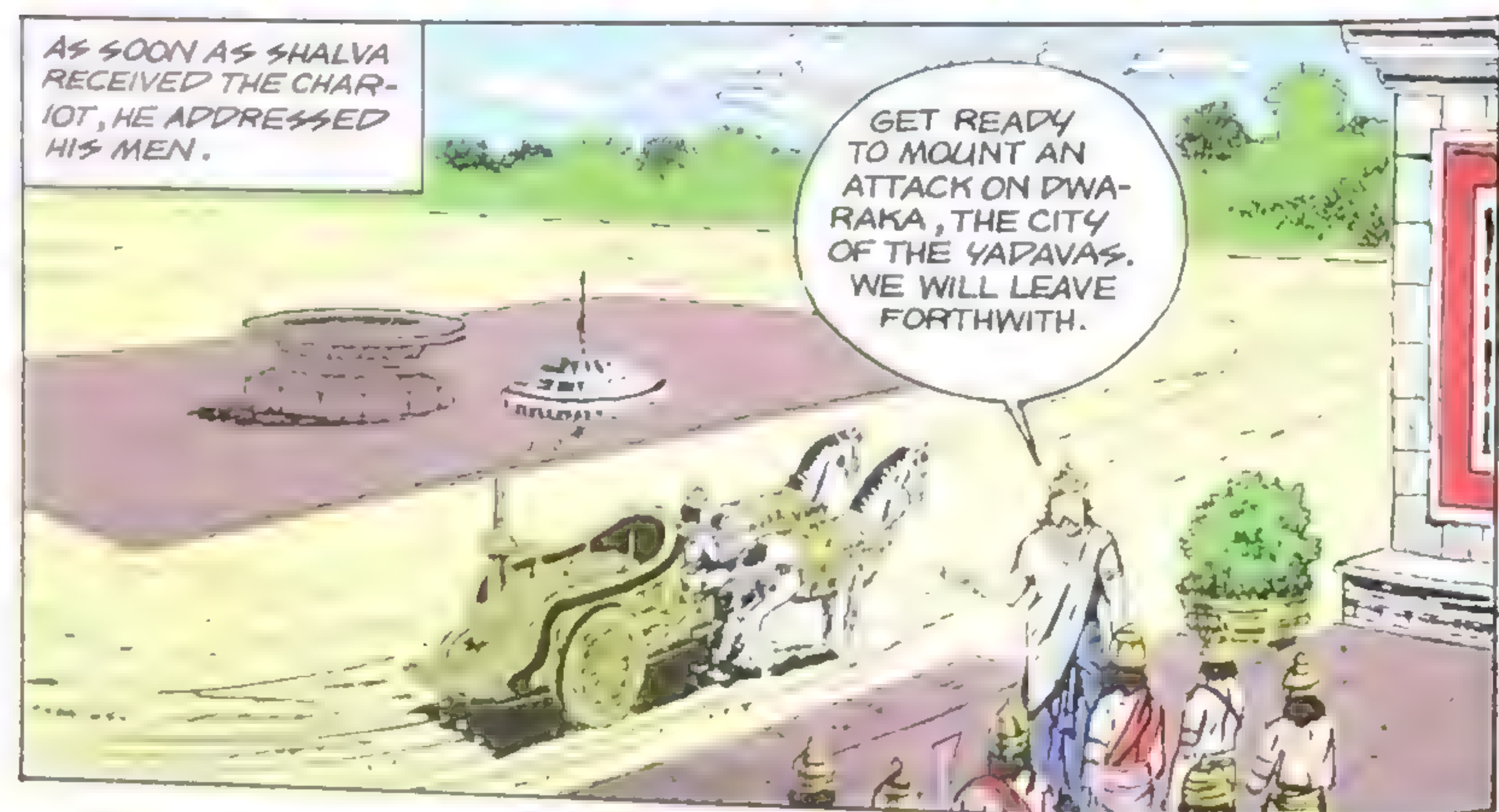
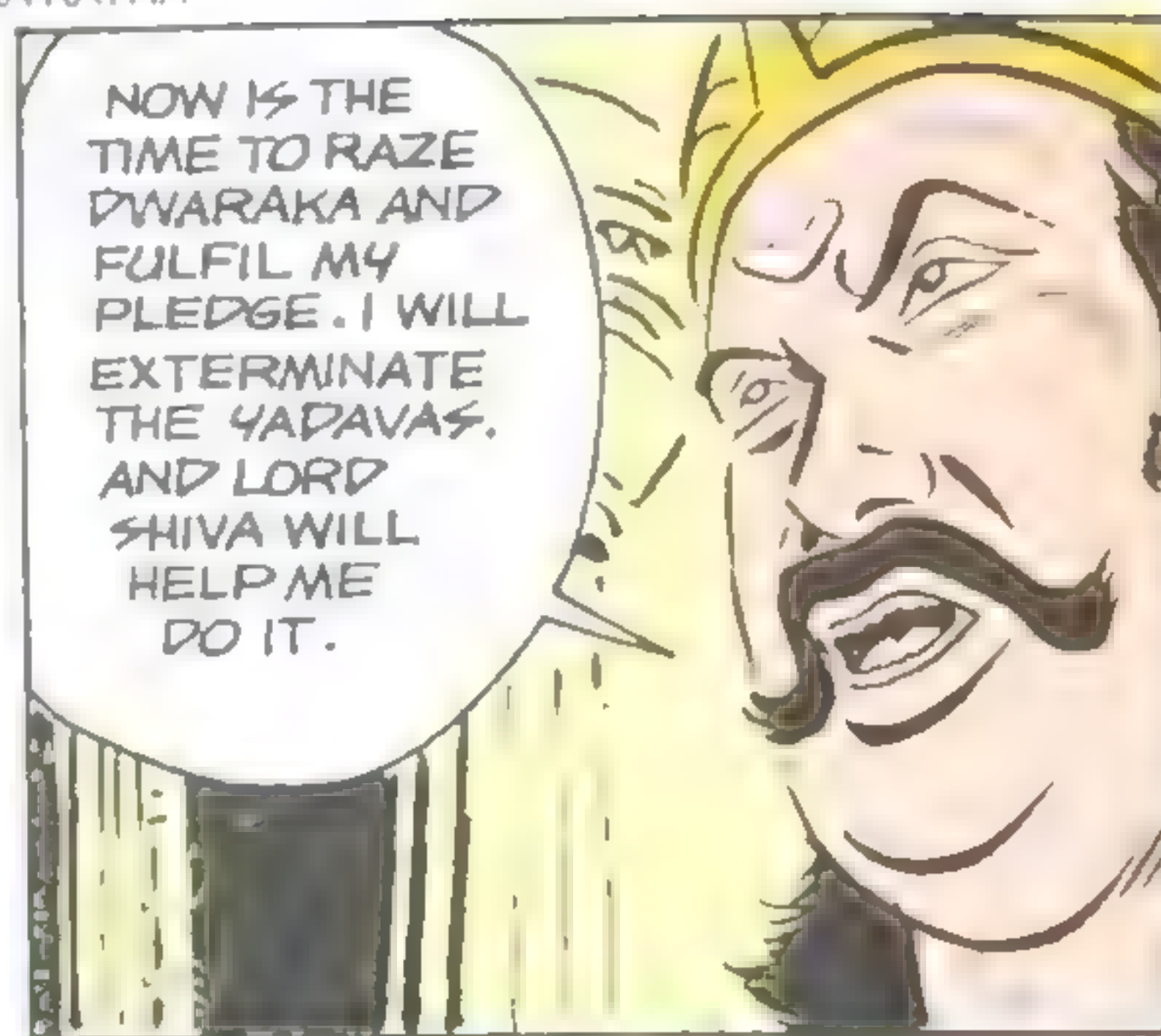
HE STOLE MY FRIEND'S BRIDE AND NOW HE HAS TAKEN HIS VERY LIFE. WHERE IS KRISHNA?

JUST THEN THE CHIEFTAIN WHO HAD STAYED BACK, ENTERED —

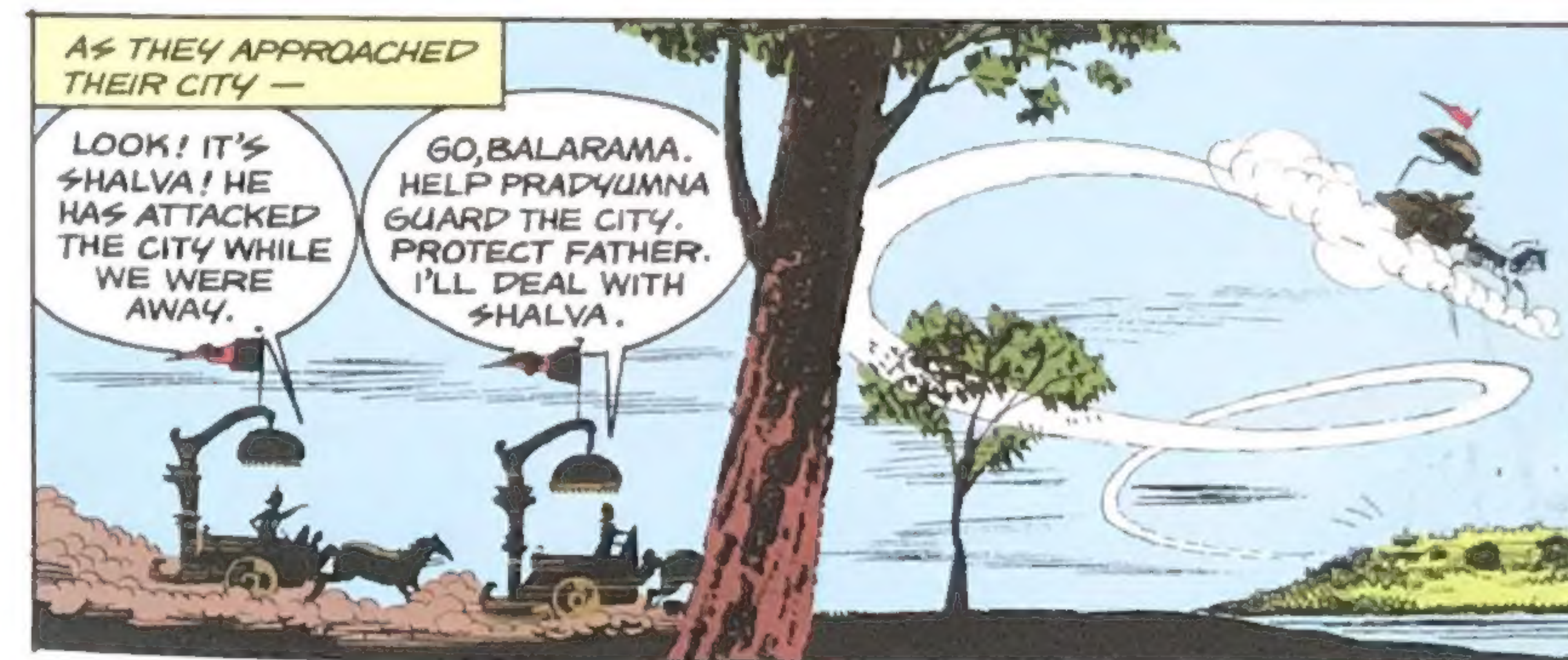
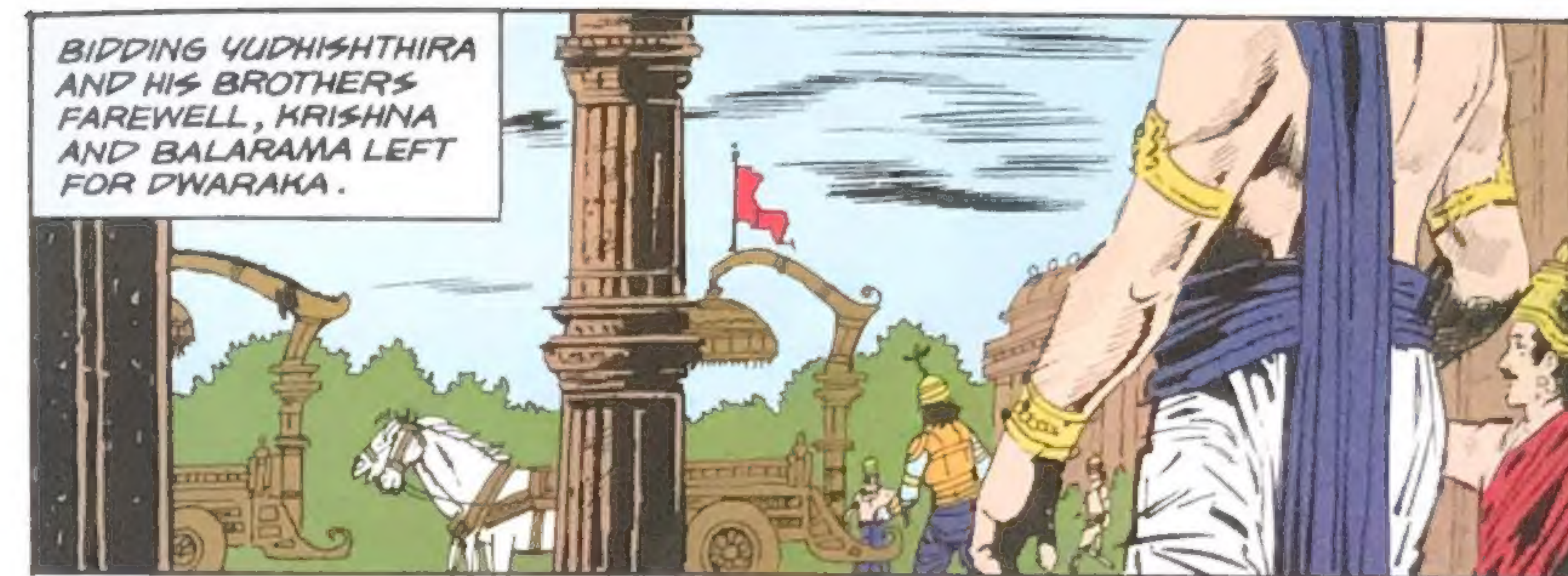
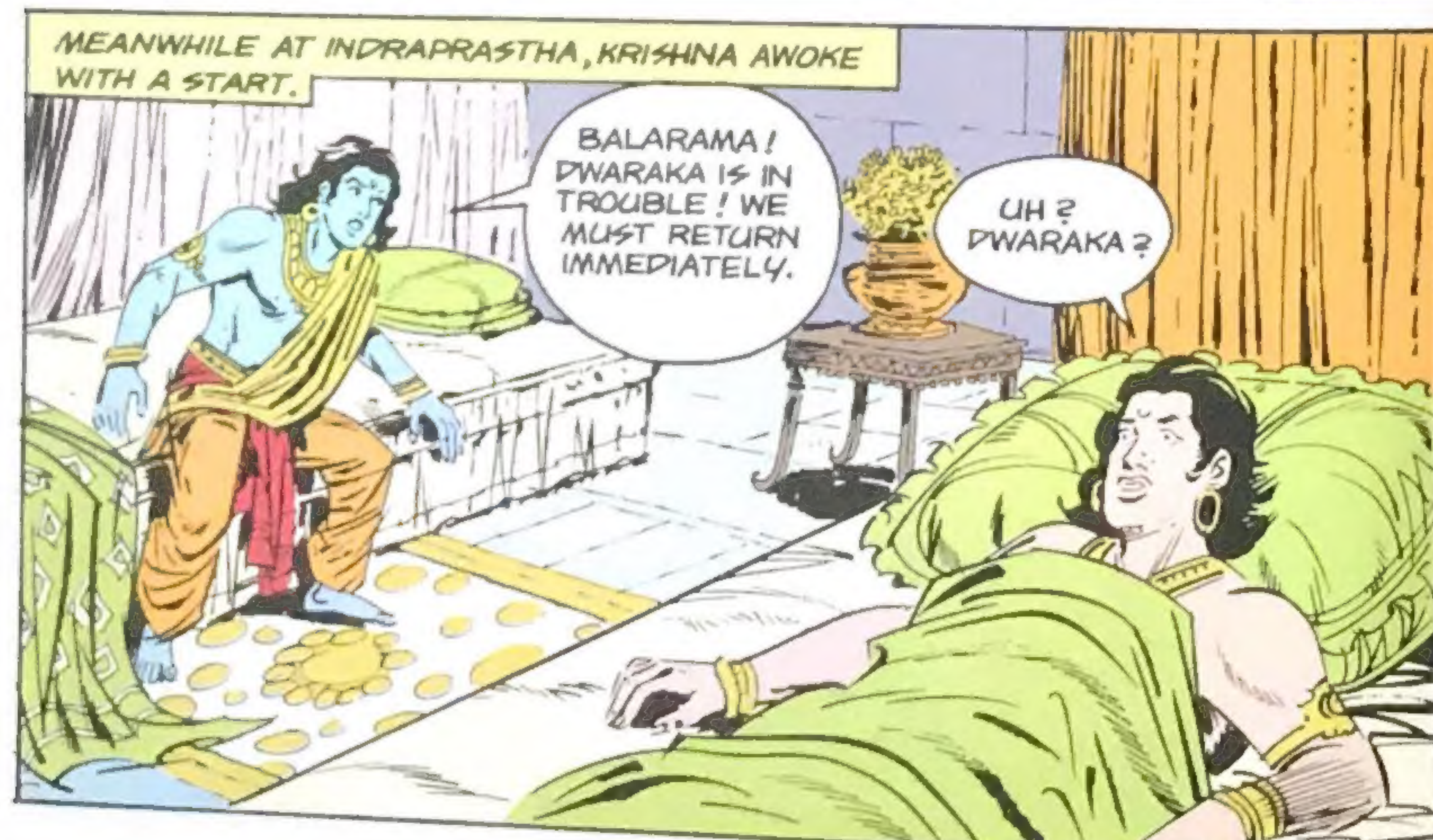
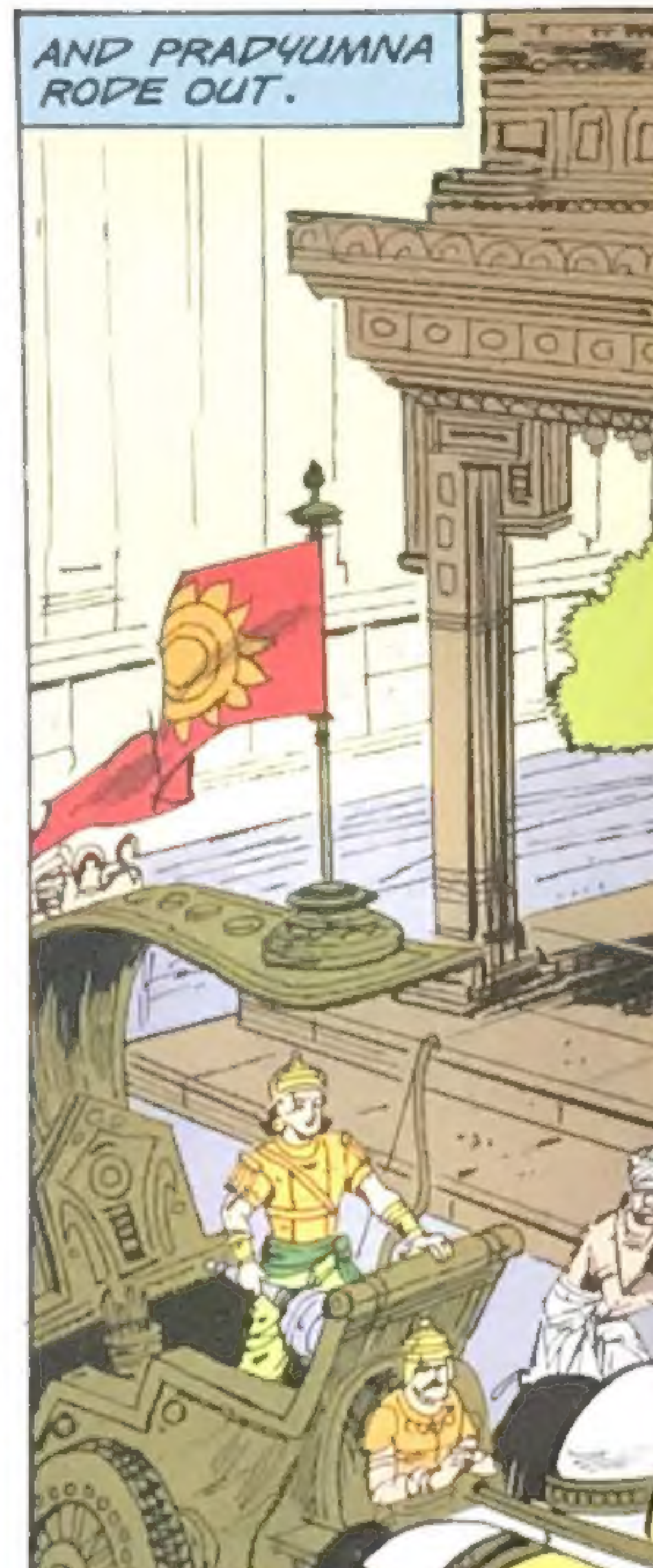


HE IS STILL AT INDRAPRASTHA. YUDHISHTHIRA ASKED HIM TO STAY ON AFTER THE SACRIFICE.







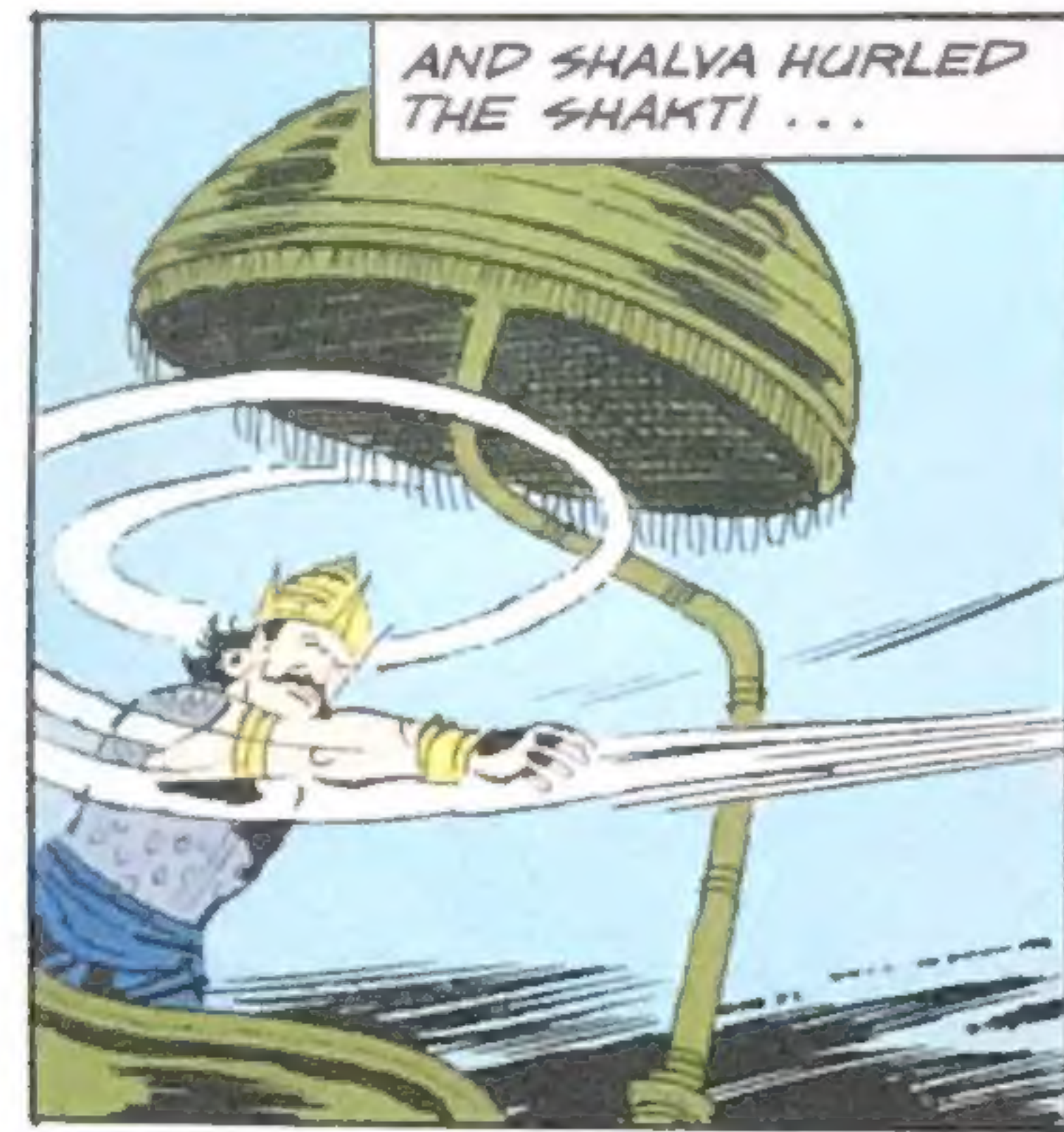




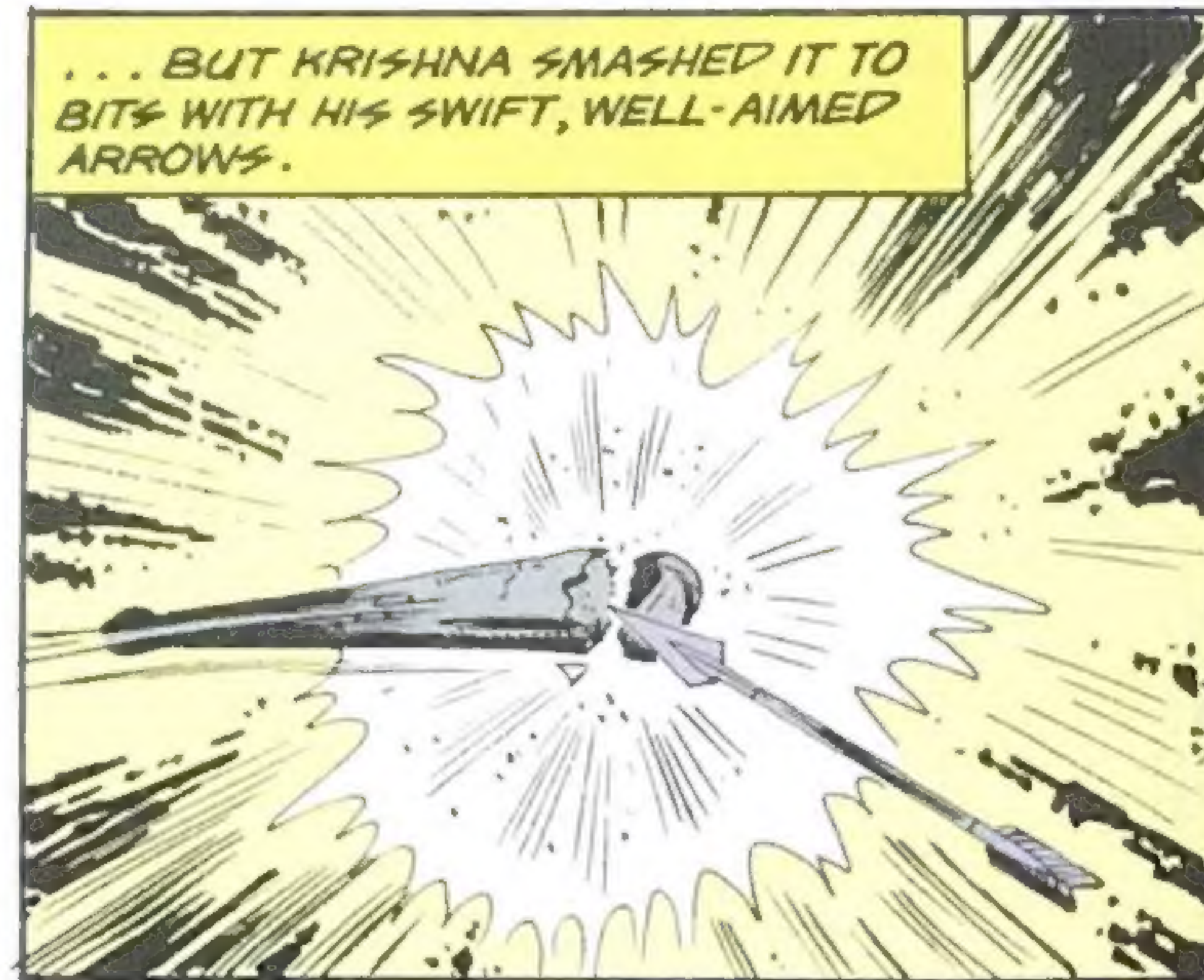
IN FACT IT WAS SHALVA WHO WAS FRIGHTENED FOR A MOMENT.



AND SHALVA HURLED  
THE SHAKTI ...



... BUT KRISHNA SMASHED IT TO  
BITS WITH HIS SWIFT, WELL-AIMED  
ARROWS.



I'LL DESTROY  
FOREVER THE BOW  
THAT SENT THOSE  
ARROWS AND THE  
HAND THAT WIELD-  
ED IT!



WITH A TRIUMPHANT ROAR, SHALVA  
MADE FOR KRISHNA.

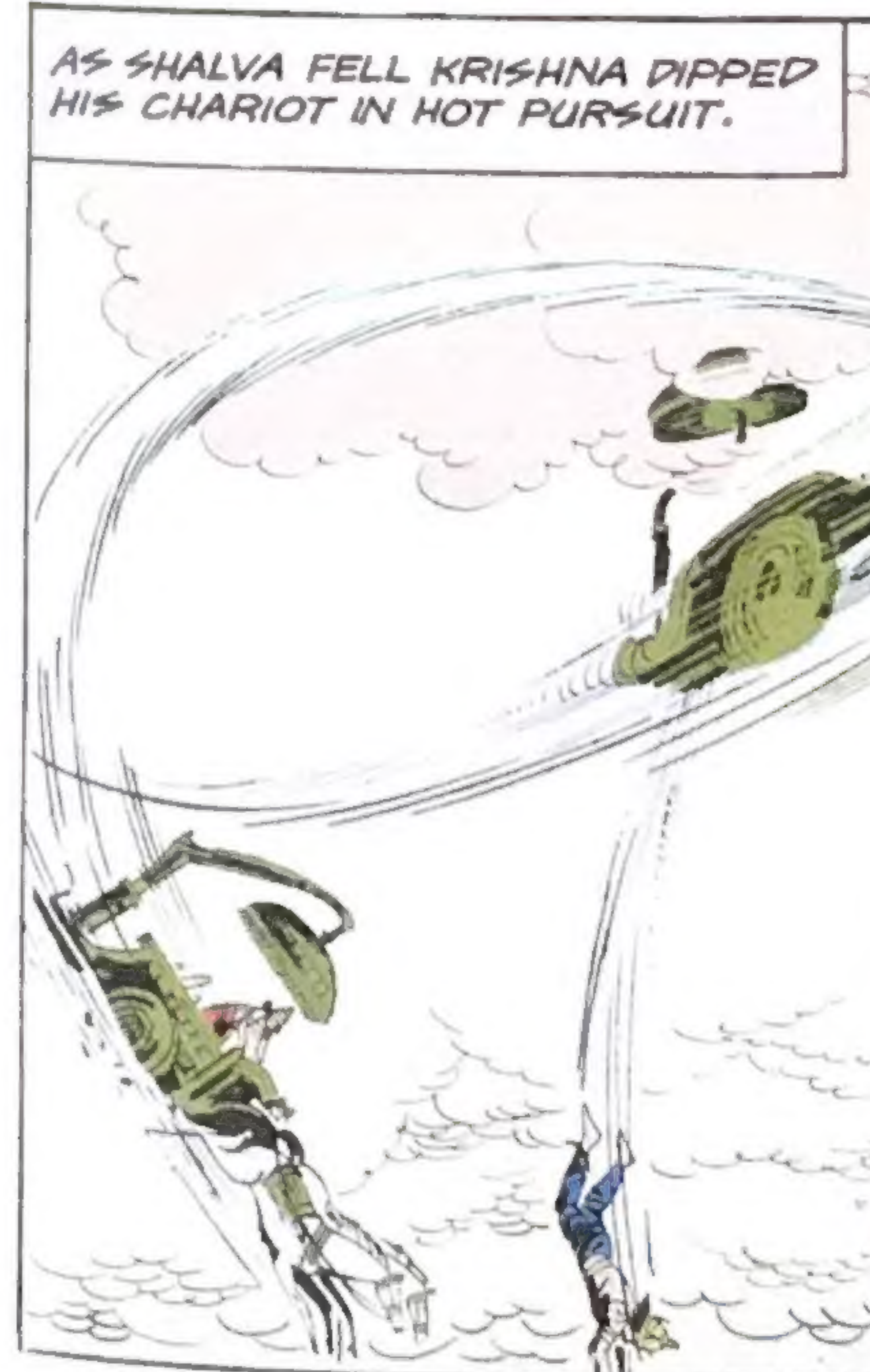


BUT THE NEXT  
MOMENT, KRISHNA  
SWUNG OUT WITH  
HIS MACE AND  
HIT SHALVA.

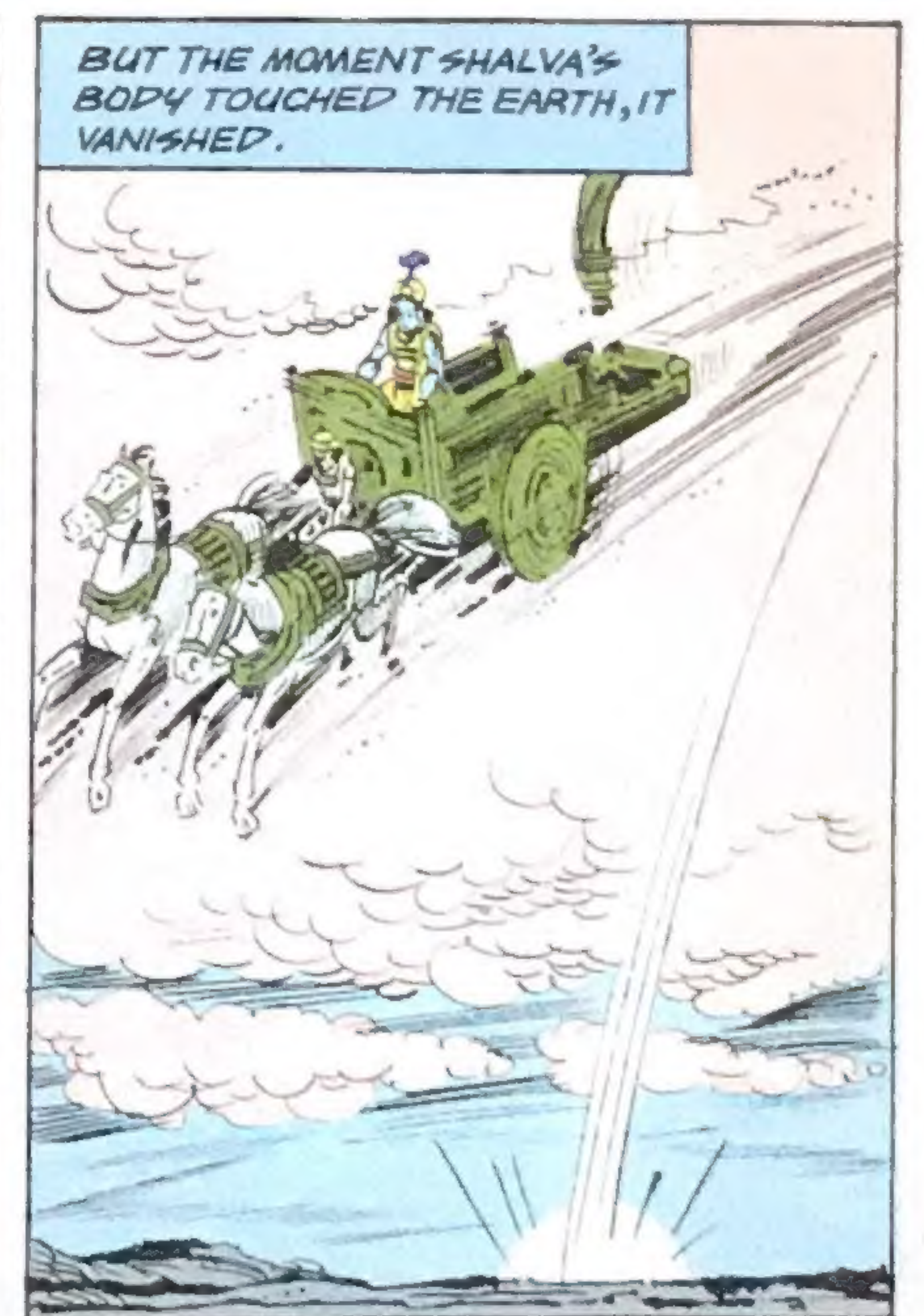
EE-A-A-AH!



AS SHALVA FELL KRISHNA DIPPED  
HIS CHARIOT IN HOT PURSUIT.



BUT THE MOMENT SHALVA'S  
BODY TOUCHED THE EARTH, IT  
VANISHED.





AND A FEW MINUTES LATER, A MAN STOOD BEFORE KRISHNA, HIS HEAD BOWED, HIS EYES STREAMING WITH TEARS.

I HAVE BEEN SENT BY DEVAKI. O KRISHNA, SHALVA HAS CARRIED AWAY YOUR FATHER!

IT CANNOT BE TRUE! HOW COULD SHALVA DEFEAT BALARAMA, AND CARRY AWAY MY FATHER! BALARAMA, WHOM EVEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS CAN'T DEFEAT!

SUDDENLY —

LOOK, KRISHNA! I'VE GOT YOUR FATHER! I PLAN TO KILL HIM BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES! IF YOU ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH, SAVE HIM.

SO WHAT I HEARD WAS TRUE!

AND SHALVA BROUGHT HIS SWORD DOWN ON HIS CAPTIVE'S NECK.

AS SHALVA MOUNTED HIS CHARIOT AND ROSE INTO THE AIR, KRISHNA WHO WAS FOR A MOMENT STUNNED, SUDDENLY REALISED THE TRUTH.

SHALVA HAS CAST A SPELL ON ME. IT'S AN ILLUSION. THERE WAS NO MESSENGER AND MY FATHER IS SAFE.

AND LO! EVEN AS KRISHNA SAW THE TRUTH, THE CORPSE AS WELL AS THE MESSENGER VANISHED.

AH! THERE HE IS! I WILL NOT SPARE HIM NOW!

HE HAS FOUND ME OUT!

QUICK! TAKE THE CHARIOT AS CLOSE TO HIM AS YOU CAN.



